Minutes of the

Meeting of the Executive Committee

of the

World Council of Churches

7 - 11 February 1995

Meeting held at the Centre International Réformé John Knox

Geneva, Switzerland

150 route de Ferney
CH 1211 Geneva 2

CONFIDENTIAL
Not for publication

EX1/95

CONTENTS

1. Opening Actions
A. Worship 1
B. Call to Order and Welcome 1
C. Roll Call 1
D. Minutes of previous Meeting 1
E. Adoption of Agenda 1

2. Report of the General Secretary 2

3. Preliminary Report of Finance Committee Moderator 3

4. Eighth Assembly
Allocation of Seats to Delegates 4

5. Public Issues
Presentation and discussion 8

6. Consolidated Africa Programme 14

7. Central Committee Meeting 1995
A. Draft Agenda and Timetable 17
B. Plenary Presentations 17
C. Reporting by Executive to Central Committee 19
D. Moderator's Report 20

8. Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC (CUV) 20

9. Reporting Process at Meetings of the Executive Committee 25

10. Report of Structure Review Group 29
A. Ecumenical Institute, Bossey 29
B. Office for Inter-Religious Relations (OIRR) 31
C. Advisory Groups in the General Secretariat 32
D. Responsibilities of Unit Committees and Commissions 32
E. Presidents of the WCC 33
F. Rules of Debate 34

G. Officers of the Units 35
H. Staffing Procedures 35
I. Concerns of the By-Laws Committee 35

11. Activities Reports
A. Unit I 36
B. Unit II 37
C. Unit III 39
D. Unit IV 41
E. OCER, OIRR, Communication, Office of Finance and Management 44

12. Criteria for Membership 46

13. Report of Staffing and Nominations Sub-committee
A. Staffing Report 47
B. Membership Matters 51
C. Applications for Membership 51

14. Report of Finance Sub-committee 52

15. Report of Programme Sub-committee 58

16. Dates and Places of Next Meetings 60

17. Closing Actions 60

APPENDICES

I Attendance 61

II Membership of Sub-committees 63

III Future of the Special Fund to Combat Racism 64

IV Policy Guidelines for WCC Work on Africa 67

World Council of Churches

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Centre International Réformé John Knox,
Geneva, Switzerland

7 - 11 February 1995

1. OPENING ACTIONS

A. Worship

Daily morning worship was led by members of the Executive Committee; meditations were given by Bishop Vinton Anderson, Rev. Eunice Santana, Dr Aaron Tolen and Prof. Anne-Marie Aagaard. Liturgies were arranged by Rev. Terry MacArthur.

B. Welcome

Greeting participants with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship, the Moderator reminded them that meeting to reflect and act together was the very meaning of ecumenical togetherness.

C. Roll Call

The General Secretary called the roll, noting apologies for absence from Ms Beatrice Danquah, Rt Rev. Drexel Gomez, Ms Maryssa Mapanao-Camaddo and Rev. Valamotu Palu. He welcomed Bishop Serapion and Archimandrite Nestor Zhiliaev who were attending as guests.

D. Minutes of previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held in Bucharest, Romania, 14-19 September 1994, were **approved** as circulated.

E. Agenda and Timetable

The General Secretary introduced the proposed agenda, and noted that a special report on the Hearings on Racism in the US would be given on 9 February during the lunch break. The agenda was **adopted.**

2. REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

In welcoming participants, Dr Raiser noted that this was the first meeting to take place in Geneva since March 1993; he felt it was important for members of the Executive to keep in touch with the larger community of staff colleagues in Geneva.

Dr Raiser informed the Executive of the sudden death the previous week of Rev. Wim van der Zee, general secretary of the Netherlands Council of Churches, who had been very active in his work in support of the ecumenical movement.

The General Secretary began his report by explaining in some detail the reasons which necessitated the change of venue and dates of the forthcoming Central Committee meeting, now to be held in Geneva, 14-22 September, preceded by the Executive on 12-13 September. The new leadership of the National Baptist Convention had wished to honour the invitation to the WCC extended by the NBC but had been overwhelmed by a number of internal difficulties, to the extent that, after careful consultation with key persons involved in the United States, it became clear that it would not be wise for the WCC to maintain the decision to meet in Nashville. This assessment was supported by the new President of the NBC.

Every possible effort had been made to find accommodation in Geneva during the same period, but due to the fact that an international exhibition was to take place in Geneva at the same time, all hotel space had long since been reserved. After discussion with the Officers, the decision was made to bring forward the dates of Central Committee by one week. He regretted the inconvenience caused, and realised that a number of members would be obliged to appoint substitutes.

Some consideration needed to be given to the policy about meetings taking place outside Geneva in view of possible budgetary limitations in the coming years, bearing in mind that it was considerably more expensive to meet away from Geneva.

Follow-up to the last meeting

Dr Raiser welcomed Ms Mary Ann Lundy who had recently taken up her position as Deputy General Secretary for Programme, and Dr Alan Falconer, director of Faith and Order. Other staff appointed in Bucharest had also taken up office.

The Executive had instructed staff to undertake a review of the new working structures: a report would be shared during the course of this meeting. There would also be an oral interim report on the first meeting of a group reviewing criteria for membership in the Council.

The majority of Central Committee members had indicated their approval of the Assembly theme as agreed by the Executive in Bucharest. Some had expressed disappointment that no new wording had emerged.

Visits

The General Secretary had continued his series of visits to member churches: in October he had been to Portugal, Norway and Sweden, in November to Germany for the EKD Synod, his first official visit there since taking office. He had been to Cyprus for the MECC Assembly, and to Latin America - Bolivia, Argentina and Chile - where he had attended the CLAI Assembly.

In March Dr Raiser would attend the UN Social Summit in Copenhagen, and would give an address on behalf of the WCC. Forthcoming travel would include Nairobi and Johannesburg, the USA, West Africa, Korea, India, the UK, and possible official visits to Rome and Jerusalem. Some travel in the Pacific in connection with the Executive Committee in March 1996 would mark the end of this first cycle of visits to member churches, after which he would plan to spend more time in Geneva in the context of more intensive preparations for the Eighth Assembly.

A steady flow of visitors to the Ecumenical Centre had continued, including many of an official character. This exchange of visits was an essential part of the Council's ministry, strengthening the network and the ecumenical fellowship of churches. Two visits deserved particular mention: a delegation from the China Christian Council, and a delegation from Iran.

There followed some discussion about the change of venue and dates of the Central Committee. Bishop Anderson apologised on behalf of the US churches for the inconvenience caused by the change, and the fact that this had happened at such a late stage. He assured the Executive that it was hoped to issue an invitation on behalf of all the US churches for Central Committee to meet in the United States in 1997. Dr Raiser affirmed that the change of dates had been unavoidable due to the non-availability of accommodation during the original period; to his knowledge such a change had only taken place once before - in 1973, for financial reasons - and he did not foresee anything of this nature occurring again.

3. PRELIMINARY REPORT OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MODERATOR

Ms Rantakari noted that, there being no budget or financial report to be approved at this meeting, it had not been necessary for the Finance Sub-committee (FSC) to

meet prior to this session of the Executive. It was still too early in the year to have a report on the results of 1994, although it was clear that this had not been such a successful financial year for the WCC as the preceding three years had been. Three factors lead to this assumption:

- the Swiss franc had remained strong against most other currencies, while the US dollar in particular had been weak. The FSC would consider the question of whether or not the present fixed budget rates should be maintained;
- in contrast to 1993, the investment portfolios had not performed well in 1994, although this was a global experience and could not be blamed on those handling the Council's investments;
- some major donors had been forced to freeze or even reduce their contributions; expenditure on the other hand had been largely contained or below budget, and strict control would continue to be exercised.

If the 1994 results show a deficit as a result of exchange rate difficulties or the poor performance of investments, appropriate adjustments could be made in the budgets over the next few years. However, if a deficit were the result of a continuing downward trend in traditional sources of income, the Council may be constrained to prioritise its activities unless alternative sources of income could be found.

The FSC would look at these factors in detail and bring recommendations to the Executive Committee for action. Ms Rantakari urged the Executive to give careful consideration in its deliberations to the financial implications of decisions about programmes and staffing. New expenditures should be resisted unless there were clear indications that the costs could be fully met. As long as the policy of integrated planning was continued, changes could be adjusted to as they occurred.

In reply to a question about exchange rates, Mr Davies explained that the Investment Advisory Group advised the Council on such matters. Although they were convinced that exchange rates would improve, it may become necessary to ask them to adjust the rates fixed for budgeting purposes.

4. ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO DELEGATES FOR THE EIGHTH ASSEMBLY

Rev. Wesley Ariarajah presented a progress report on actions taken by staff in accordance with the mandate given by the Executive and Central Committees at their last meetings (minutes of Executive Committee, September 1994, pp.26-27; 48-50).

A letter had duly been sent to member churches requesting up-to-date membership statistics and comments about the proposed allocation of seats. Some 50% of the churches had provided membership statistics, while only a small number had commented on the model for the allocation of seats.

It was noted that, at its meeting in September 1994, the Executive did not act on a recommendation submitted in response to a request by Central Committee (minutes, January 1994, pp.87-88) regarding the appointment of the **15% category of delegates**. This related to:

- the allocation of additional seats to the Orthodox Churches in order to bring their representation up to 25% of the total, and
- the allocation of additional seats to churches which have complied with the criteria, in order to achieve the required balances of women, youth and lay persons (not more than one additional seat per church).

There was insufficient data available to define the **financial implications** of the assembly, but a number of points were noted:

- a staff group had been appointed to work on the question of criteria for subsidies for delegates; it would report to the Executive and Central Committees in 1996;
- some preliminary work had been done based on churches that had been granted subsidies for their delegates to the Seventh Assembly;
- a number of new factors have to be taken into account in view of the new model proposed as a basis for the seat allocations, in view of new member churches who have joined the Council since Canberra, not forgetting changed circumstances affecting in particular a number of churches in Eastern Europe.

Dr Raiser reminded the Executive that the Assembly Planning Committee (APC) reports directly to Central Committee; it would meet in May 1995 and report to Central Committee in September.

In discussion on the **15% allocation**, some concern was expressed lest any imbalance among Orthodox delegations affect adversely the balances achieved by others. Responding, Dr Tsetsis pointed out that since Vancouver (1983) the Orthodox had tried to include women and lay persons in their delegations and would continue to do so. But if the allocation of seats should reflect the reality of a church's membership, the reality of the Orthodox Churches must be understood: they have a different style and a different way of dealing with church matters.

Yet the circumstances of Orthodox churches vis à vis other churches was not in fact different, said Dr Raiser. In no case could the WCC instruct its member churches

to compose their delegations in a particular way; it can try to persuade and try to be convincing about the wisdom of the criteria, but every church had a right to appoint its own delegation as it wished. No church had refused to consider the criteria, but each had the freedom to decide its own way of complying.

Dr Nababan asked whether there was any way of knowing how many member churches were influenced by the criteria in such a way that they changed the composition of their delegation to make it more balanced. He felt that the aim should be to ensure that attitudes within the churches were changed in relation to the participation of women and youth in leadership positions. Such a change of attitude had indeed taken place within his own church, and he felt that this was an example that could be shared with others to encourage them to see things differently.

Bishop Anderson said that, prior to Canberra, the Black Churches in the US had agreed not to be in competition with one another but found a way to achieve an overall balanced representation among themselves.

Fr Kishkovsky stressed the importance of helping all the churches do what is proper in their own setting and according to their own theology with regard to the participation of women.

Ms Mendis expressed the hope that the Orthodox would include a number of young people in their delegations. It was important to get young people enthusiastic about the ecumenical movement now, so that all may be enriched by their contribution.

Bishop Zacharias stressed the importance of encouraging churches to observe the criteria, and urged that an educational process be carried out to help them understand that not only was it necessary to have a certain balance at the assembly but that this affected the balance in the membership of the Central Committee to be elected by the assembly. In earlier days his own church had been represented by the head of the church, but for more recent assemblies a balanced and fully representative delegation had been appointed.

Metropolitan Kirill took up the point of how the composition of a delegation reflects the reality of a church's membership. Although in the former Soviet Union the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) had had no statistics but used approximate figures, the results of current research showed that about 80% of the population of Russia, Ukraine and Belorus were baptised in the ROC; only 50% of this figure would give a total of about 100 million members. While small protestant churches - often the result of divisions - were each entitled to one or more delegates, the ROC lost out

on the number of delegates it might send by the very fact that it does not have such divisions. As an example, Metr. Kirill mentioned one of his parishes which has 25,000 members yet is not eligible to send a delegate, while a church elsewhere with a total membership of 25,000 is invited to send at least one delegate. He hoped this question could be discussed sometime, since the assembly must reflect the reality existing in the world and not just use an artificial model.

Responding to Metropolitan Kirill, the General Secretary agreed that so far the WCC had not been able to bridge the gap between ecclesial traditions of a radical congregationalist nature and those with an episcopal structure. This inability was especially evident at the point of composing delegations to an assembly. Certainly the idea should be avoided that we were encouraging division - this would be against the whole *raison d'être* of the WCC - but whether our policies work in this direction was a valid question and we should be prepared to face it. This matter was being faced in the context of the discussion on criteria for membership in the Council and a report would come to the Executive in September. The debate would surely continue and we must be prepared to face the challenge.

Secondly, there were great differences among the member churches as to how they count their membership, said Dr Raiser. Statistics were ambiguous, but we have to accept the figures provided by the churches, only asking what criteria they use to establish them; some include only communicant members while others count all baptised members even though only a small percentage may be active members.

It was because of the fear that the Orthodox Churches, being large ecclesial bodies, might lose out in the share of delegates at the assembly and on Central Committee that the agreement had been reached to fix a figure of 25%, precisely in order to make sure that the total assembly reflected adequately the realities among the WCC's constituency. Dr Raiser believed this was a necessary measure to help correct eventual consequences of statistical adjustments. He assured Metr. Kirill that his concern had thus received a certain response in WCC policies, even if this was not perfect and might still need to be changed.

Dr Ariarajah noted that one of the major imbalances in the past had been the fact that 147 member churches were entitled to only one delegate; that was why efforts had been made to give each church a minimum of two delegates this time.

The report was referred to the Sub-committee on Nominations.

At a later session, Dr Nababan presented the report of the Sub-committee which proposed that the Executive approve the following recommendations:

- *that the progress report be received;*
- *that the Executive Committee* ***recommend*** *to the Central Committee that the procedures for the appointment of the 15% category of delegates to the Eighth Assembly be as follows:*
  - *the allocation of additional seats to Orthodox Churches in order to bring Orthodox representation up to 25% of the total;*
  - *as necessary to achieve the balances of women, youth and lay persons, as determined by Central Committee. The allocation of an additional seat to selected churches on criteria to be determined by Central Committee.*

Prof. Aagaard asked why there were no clear criteria for allocating the 15% category of delegates. Dr Ariarajah explained that, for some previous assemblies, only those churches complying with the guidelines for the composition of delegations had been offered an additional seat; however, it was usually the smaller churches which were unable to comply, whilst the larger churches did comply and thus became eligible for an extra seat.

The General Secretary said it was intended to make very conservative use of the 15% this time. We should assume that the member churches would do their best to meet the criteria for the composition of their delegations, and only after they had responded should consideration be given to where the balances needed redressing.

The Executive Committee **agreed** to the above recommendations.

5. PUBLIC ISSUES

Mr Clement John (in the absence of Rev. Dwain Epps) introduced background notes on public issues, drawing attention in particular to the continuing conflicts in Bosnia/Herzegovina and in Rwanda-Burundi. The situation of Rwandan refugees in the camps remained tense, while recommendations by UN officials on human rights were not realisable due to lack of funds.

As the Executive Committee decided not to issue any public statement at this meeting, a summary of the main points made in the background document and in the subsequent discussion is included below.

Bosnia/Herzegovina

A meeting, chaired by Dr Tsetsis, had been convened in January 1995 for dialogue between Bishop Irenej of the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) and representatives of concerned member churches and related councils of churches. A communiqué issued by the participants was welcomed in some quarters, but criticised in others for failing to condemn more clearly the positions of the SOC. A subsequent joint statement by the general secretaries of WCC and CEC was similarly criticised by some of the western European press as well as by some churches, although it was welcomed by those close to the negotiations. A formal reply to the letter to Patriarch Pavle by the two general secretaries in September 1994 was received in December but it failed to answer a number of the questions posed.

Contacts continued with the SOC, with the possibility of a follow-up meeting in Belgrade. This conflict had brought to the surface some fundamental issues and basic challenges to the ecumenical fellowship, and ways must be found to face these together honestly. It was difficult to move out of this zone of unclarity but it was essential to maintain critical dialogue with the SOC, drawing in other churches in the Balkans also, although the SOC was hesitant about widening the scope of discussions. More was at stake than the future of Bosnia/Herzegovina and the former Yugoslavia.

The visit to the area by former US President Jimmy Carter in December 1994 provided the necessary catalyst for the declaration of a cease-fire by the main parties to the conflict. New negotiations had been undertaken by the Contact Group and negotiators of the Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, the results of which had yet to be seen.

Rwanda-Burundi

Church World Action-Rwanda (CWA-R) had adopted a statement sharply critical of the delays in United Nations response in the area of human rights. Apparently this had contributed to accelerated action in terms of deployment of human rights monitors, and other actions by the UN. Nevertheless, the security situation in the camps, especially in Zaire, had deteriorated, giving cause for concern that the armed opposition led by members of the militia of the former Rwandan Government may be gaining sufficient strength to pose a new security threat inside the country.

The Christian Council of Rwanda (CPR), inactive for some time, had resumed activities with the return to Rwanda of its general secretary. The CPR had taken advantage of the government's offer to resume programmes on the national radio network to broadcast regular messages of peace and reconciliation.

Unit III was giving support to African civil sector initiatives in the Great Lakes region of which Rwanda and Burundi are a part, complementing especially the ACIST (African Community Initiatives Support Teams) dimensions of CWA-R.

Chechnya

A number of statements had been issued by His Holiness Alexy II calling for negotiations and dialogue in pursuit of a peaceful solution which would respect the rights of the people of Chechnya while preserving the historic unity of the nations. A joint statement together with Mufti Alsabekov of Chechnya had been issued on 15 December calling for an immediate cessation of the bloodshed and urging those in power to refrain from the use of weapons to resolve this conflict. Other statements by H.H. Alexy on 26 December and 4 January implored the leaders of Russia to lay down their arms, asserting that there could be no legal justification for the injustice and violence inflicted by their actions.

Church World Action-Chechnya was coordinating the international ecumenical response, in consultation with the Russian Orthodox Church and the UNHCR. Recommendations for a plan of action to provide humanitarian relief and assistance were in process of preparation.

Fr Kishkovsky mentioned his recent visit to Ingushetia and his plans to visit Dagestan shortly, both countries bordering Chechnya. The refugee crisis was enormous and he feared the conflict might spread more widely within the region. He urged the Christian world community to respond in humanitarian and other ways to the needs there, in full collaboration with the Russian Orthodox Church.

Metropolitan Kirill explained the background to the tragedy of Chechnya, which was one of the results of events following the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Dzhokhar Dudaev had presented himself as the national leader, supported by the authorities in Moscow, even to the extent of obtaining weapons, and when the army left Chechnya, Dudaev was armed for the struggle against the communists. He insisted that Chechnya was independent, and for three years the Moscow authorities kept silence, despite the fact that the situation amounted to a dictatorship, with human rights violations, and so on. When the authorities did decide to intervene, they chose the worst possible option, resulting in enormous bloodshed.

The main concern of the church at this point was to help all who were suffering, both Christian and Muslim. Some 200,000 refugees, mainly children and older women, were living in terrible conditions, lacking everything. The ROC was grateful for the help being given through the WCC and various agencies. A

committee had been formed to coordinate assistance to the refugees, but it was difficult to do much for those remaining in Chechnya because the military were seizing aid packets rather than letting them through to the civilian population. A system was being established for transporting aid from Moscow with guarantees of security, and Metr. Kirill stressed the great need for support by the international community in providing urgent emergency assistance.

Dr Raiser pointed out that a joint emergency structure was already in place and an appeal would be launched shortly through the normal procedures. It would be helpful if Unit IV in its covering letter to the appeal could indicate that it had the support of the Executive Committee: he felt this would serve a better purpose than a separate statement. This was **agreed.**

Dr Kässmann expressed a sense of helplessness in face of these ever more numerous conflicts which continued to arise. Was there not some way of foreseeing such strife and preventing it before it got to the stage where there was nothing to do but react in face of yet more devastation? She hoped that the Programme to Overcome Violence might provide an instrument to help prevent the escalation of conflicts at an early stage.

South Africa

An expanded round-table meeting had been held with the SACC and related agencies to begin a process of reflection on ecumenical response to emerging needs. As a follow-up, an international conference on South Africa was scheduled for March 1995; this event was to provide the churches with an opportunity to share with the ecumenical family their vision of post-apartheid South Africa. The WCC was facilitating and accompanying the churches in this process.

Angola

In consultation with the Evangelical Congregational Church of Angola, the WCC had monitored developments in the country in relation to the peace process. The Angolan churches had welcomed the Lusaka Protocol signed in November 1994, opening the way to peace, democracy and national reconciliation. Efforts were being made to overcome the divisions resulting from the war which the people had endured for two decades.

Cuba

A meeting with church leaders had been organised to review the present situation and assist them in formulating an effective witness in a time of crisis. Cuban church leaders had accepted an invitation to meet in Geneva in March for further

discussions. Conversations were continuing, together with the agencies, with respect to the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Ms Santana expressed concern that there had been no official WCC representation at a world conference organised in solidarity with Cuba, which she had attended. She hoped the General Secretary would be able to visit the country before long.

Haiti

It was reported that Charles Harper had accompanied President Aristide on his return to Haiti. A meeting had recently taken place between Unit IV and Haitian church leaders to take stock of the needs and arrange for humanitarian assistance.

Ecuador and Peru

Responding to a request by Ms Santana for more information about the current frontier battles on the border between Ecuador and Peru, Ms Ritchie said there were signs that these might spread if they could not be stopped soon. Many of the neo-liberal policies prevalent were making use of religious language to confront the people; some of the churches were involved in this power game, often due to a lack of understanding of what was happening.

The process in Latin American countries demonstrated the weakness of the democratic system there and its vulnerability in face of emerging new dictatorships. Advantage was being taken of such weakness to provoke artificial confrontations between the different countries, and the situation should be followed carefully.

Albania

Dr Tsetsis informed the Executive that the firm stand taken by the WCC and CEC in relation to Albania had been appreciated not only in that country but in the Orthodox world in general. A letter addressed to the Albanian Government by the WCC's Acting General Secretary had urged a reversal of the decision to include in the draft Constitution a discriminatory article on religious organisations. Partly as a result of this and of other international pressures, the offending provisions were put in suspense, said Dr Tsetsis. The proposed constitution had meanwhile been rejected by 65% of the population.

Bougainville

Bishop Boseto reported on the situation in Bougainville. He had met the UN representative sent to follow up the resolution by the UN Commission on Human Rights, sharing with him the Executive's resolution (Bucharest, September 1994, minutes p.40). This resolution welcomed the cease-fire agreement, encouraged the

parties to continue negotiations for a full and lasting settlement, and encouraged the churches to minister to the victims of the conflict as they seek to rebuild their communities. Although there was some question of the UN sending a peace-keeping force, the Bishop felt it would be better for an independent body to come to the area to create a peaceful environment where a process of reconciliation could happen; this proposal would be presented to the current session of the UN Commission on Human Rights. Further plans for follow up would be discussed with CCIA and the Pacific Desk of Unit IV, as well as with the Pacific Conference of Churches.

Korea

In 1984, in Tozanso, Japan, the WCC convened a consultation on Peace and Justice in North-East Asia, with the aim of creating an ecumenical network for peace and reconciliation, and to support the efforts of the Korean churches for reunification of the peninsula. Subsequently the WCC facilitated three encounters between representatives of the Korean Christian Federation (KCF) in the North and representatives of the churches in the South, at Glion, Switzerland, between 1986 and 1990. During this period a number of delegations from the WCC and ecumenical partners visited North Korea in an effort to foster goodwill and understanding between the KCF and the ecumenical movement.

In April 1988 the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCK) convened an international conference on Peace and Justice in Inchon, South Korea, which adopted a theological declaration proposing five principles for reunification: (1) self-reliance, (2) peace, (3) national unity, (4) humanitarianism, (5) full participation of the people in the process of reunification. The conference called on churches around the world to join in an annual Day of Prayer for Peaceful Reunification each year on the Sunday preceding 15 August, the anniversary of liberation, in preparation for the Jubilee Year 1995 - fifty years after the division of the peninsula.

Since 1990 there had been a break in the process, partly due to the changing geo-political climate in the region. WCC's repeated efforts to re-establish contacts with the North finally bore fruit when a delegation of KCF met representatives of the NCCK in Beijing in January 1995. As a result of this breakthrough, the Fourth International Ecumenical Consultation for Peace and Reunification would take place in Kyoto, Japan, in March 1995, bringing together church leaders from North and South Korea as well as other representatives of the ecumenical movement.

East Timor

A planned visit had had to be postponed until March 1995 due to the unrest surrounding the APEC meeting and the visit of President Clinton. The consultation

planned in conjunction with the visit did however take place and had contributed to significant advances in the dialogue among the churches in East Timor, Indonesia, Portugal and more widely.

Indonesia

The WCC had followed with concern the November 1992 intervention of the Indonesian military in the internal affairs of the HKBP Church which resulted in division within its ranks. Together with other international ecumenical partners the WCC had kept aware of developments and remained in close touch with the PGI as it engaged in mediation efforts. A meeting of ecumenical partners of the HKBP Church from both within and outside Indonesia was scheduled to take place in Geneva in March 1995, in order to determine the role that the international ecumenical partners might play in the mediation process.

Iran

The General Secretary explained the background behind an encounter he had had in Geneva with representatives of the government-related office for inter-religious relations of Iran. It was clear that these had little knowledge of the Council and its constituency prior to their visit, having assumed that the WCC holds a similar status vis à vis its member churches to that held by the Vatican in relation to the Roman Catholic Church.

The delegation came to urge the Council to exercise some control over undisciplined evangelising groups which are pushing their way into Iran, and were disappointed when told that it was not possible to comply with such a request. However, it was made clear that no talking relationship could be established with official quarters in Iran before obtaining assurance that such conversations had the support of the churches there. Signals had been received from the Christian community that it could be useful if Iranian officials were enabled to gain a better understanding of the nature of the Christian presence, in particular the evangelical presence, and a possible broadening of the scope of Christian/Muslim dialogue. Efforts were being made to follow up the encounter with a possible staff visit to Iran in the near future.

6. CONSOLIDATED AFRICA PROGRAMME

Rev. Samuel Kobia presented an update on the situation in relation to this programme, and a paper setting out policy guidelines to provide a programmatic framework for the Council's work in Africa (Appendix IV). He recalled the Africa Minute adopted by the Executive at its meeting in March 1993 (minutes pp.43-44)

which was a clear admission that Africa was going through a crisis. While Asia and Latin America would appear to be emerging from some of their problems, Africa seemed to be sinking more deeply into crisis. The ecumenical movement was challenged to affirm that Africa does matter, and the churches could not be unaffected by what was happening there.

The process of change in Africa had generated a crisis of vision and leadership: leadership during the past 20 years had not provided the space through which a clear vision could emerge. Since 1989 Africa had been going through a democratisation process - but this was not producing democracy. The prophetic ministry of the church had had a high profile, but what was the church in fact to be and to do in Africa? What was the role of the ecumenical movement? There was need for the WCC to accompany the churches in Africa and help them answer these questions.

Priorities in Africa today included a proper analysis and interpretation on the contemporary African situation so that a coordinated response could be made. A new social ethic must be sought, and economic opportunities expanded and broadened. Stability for the poor and marginalised was central and must be achieved by means of social reconstruction, capacity building, education, and so on.

It was proposed to set up an inter-unit monitoring group to provide mechanisms for ongoing assessment and evaluation of programmatic work in Africa. Such a group would oversee the coordination of the work to avoid duplication and ensure coherence with regard to concept and methods of approach.

Discussion

Ms Best said that when an AACC delegation visited Canada recently, she had sensed some tension between the AACC and the World Council. Was this the case? In response, Bishop Okullu spoke of his experience as chairman of AACC's Board of International Affairs at the same time as being a member of the WCC Central Committee. There had always been a certain tension in relationships between the two bodies which called for understanding and careful discussion, but it should not prevent us from doing what needed to be done.

Referring to Mr Kobia's mention of a lack of visionary leadership in Africa, Bishop Okullu pointed out that he was one of Africa's church leaders, directly elected by his church to represent the people. He felt the WCC should not single out Africa but continue involvement in all continents, providing ways to link up with each other. He regretted that two years after the Africa minute had been drawn up the discussion

was still at this level. A good deal *was* being done by the churches - the problem lay in the fact that there was not sufficient coordination.

Bishop Boseto also addressed the question of vision and leadership: the ecumenical movement may have a vision, but the leadership must be committed to carrying out that vision - that was where the failure had been. The challenge was how to commit the leadership to implementing the vision, not only at national level but at congregational/parish level, not only in Africa but also elsewhere.

Dr Tolen recalled that the intention behind the Africa minute was to broaden and coordinate the Council's programmes in Africa, to deal together with the crisis in terms of prevention rather than intensive care. He felt that a staff person should be named to take charge of the programme, and Ms Gcabashe also held the view that a coordinator could help to make the work more effective, maintaining communication with African members of the governing bodies to ensure involvement at grassroots level.

Prof. Aagaard hoped that Central Committee would discuss the paper as a policy document for the member churches as a whole; it was indeed time for the process to get going. Ms Rantakari thought that policy guidelines might be prepared for work on other continents also, but stressed that wherever resourcing was involved, priorities must be set.

The Moderator noted that Africa was a special situation and was being treated in a special way. Following the process of consultation with churches and ecumenical bodies, as well as with sisters and brothers in Africa, a consensus had been achieved, and he felt the paper provided a working basis for action related to Africa. He was less sure of the need for an additional staff person; he preferred the suggestion that an inter-unit group be appointed to coordinate the process and keep it as a Council-wide concern.

Dr Kobia affirmed the intention to improve relationships between the AACC and the WCC. Secondly, he expected a good deal of support from African churches, many of which would identify themselves with what was said in the document.

The General Secretary was confident that the lines of coordination were strong and close, and that it was not necessary to appoint an additional staff person for this process. The present priority was to build on the progress made since March 1993 and to concentrate on working on the policies and tasks that had been set out and agreed upon.

7. MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE: 14-22 SEPTEMBER 1995

A. Agenda and Timetable

Ms Becher presented the draft agenda and timetable which had been adapted to the change of location to Geneva. It was hoped to arrange for Central Committee members to participate in local worship services on Sunday 17 September. Dr Tsetsis pointed out that 14 September is the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross, a major occasion for the Orthodox, of which due account should be taken.

B. Plenary Presentations

Dr Ariarajah introduced a paper proposing four plenary presentations during this meeting of Central Committee. In light of comments and criticisms of past presentations, particular care had been taken in selecting the subjects and format of the sessions, taking into account the following principles:

a) Plenary presentations at Central Committee meetings should have the primary aim of enabling the churches, through the members of Central Committee, to engage in mutual sharing, debate and discussion on issues that are central to the life and ministry of the churches and on issues they face together in the world. To this end, plenary presentations should not primarily be information sessions on issues and programmes; rather they should seek to animate discussion and informed debate among Central Committee members;

b) As far as possible, plenary presentations should have a variety of formats and use different methodologies to present issues;

c) Meetings of Central Committee should have a programmatic and theological coherence. The various plenary presentations should therefore be seen in their inter-relationship and in relation to the reports of the General Secretary and the Moderator of Central Committee;

d) There should be clarity about the purpose of each presentation, its intended goals, and the nature of any action that might be required of the Central Committee.

The main purpose of each of the four plenary presentations proposed for this meeting was:

1) To enable reflection and discussion on the **mission of the church today** in order to make an input and contribution to the preparatory processes for the

forthcoming WCC World Mission Conference, and to set the context for the plenaries to follow;

2) To engage in a common reflection on the challenges faced in relation to the churches' ministry and witness with **uprooted people**. Following the presentation, Central Committee would seek to adopt a policy statement based on the discussions and recommendations of the Unit IV Committee;

3) To discern where the emphasis should be in the **churches' ministry in relation to racism** today. The Programme to Combat Racism within the earlier structure and mandate had a special focus on apartheid in Southern Africa. Much debate had taken place recently on the nature and focus of WCC's continued ministry in the area of confronting racism today in its different expressions. The plenary presentation would open up the issue for mutual sharing, and it was hoped that the plenary debate would help the Unit III Committee to further shape and refine programme policy in this area;

4) To provide a space, especially in this year marking the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations, for Central Committee to make an input to the current debate on **Global Governance**, the future role of the UN, and the nature and role of the churches in the area of international relationships.

It was noted that the General Secretary's report would, among other matters, provide opportunity to reflect further on the **Common Understanding and Vision** process, and that the Moderator's report would concentrate on the issue of **Gospel and Cultures**. There would also be a plenary on the **Eighth Assembly**, with input from the work of the Assembly Planning Committee meeting in May 1995.

The overarching concern of this meeting of Central Committee was to enable a conversation among the churches on the challenges we face in our understanding of the nature of the mission of the church today and the specific witness of the churches in relation to:

- the plight of the uprooted people,
- the continuing manifestations of racism, and to
- the search to order our life together as nations.

All plenaries (except the one on uprooted people which called for detailed work on a document by the Unit Committees) would be followed by a session for plenary discussion.

An outline of the proposed format of the plenaries reflected the present state of discussion regarding content and format. These would be revised and worked on further in the light of input from the Executive Committee.

General satisfaction was voiced about the proposals. Dr Tolen asked that, in relation to the plenary on Global Governance, it be kept in mind that in 1945 when the major world organisations were forming, many countries in the so-called third world were still colonies, while the member countries of the United Nations were in general the colonisers.

The document was referred to the Programme Sub-committee.

At a later session, Ms Ritchie presented the report of the Programme Sub-committee which recommended approval of the proposed plans for plenary sessions at the Central Committee meeting.

With regard to the plenary on Global Governance, the Sub-committee suggested that one of the speakers on the churches' contribution to Global Governance be a person familiar with the WCC, its history and its involvement in the UN system.

Dr Kässmann added that such a person should give some direction about what might be the WCC's future relationship to the UN system, which meant that a knowledge of both the WCC **and** the UN would be essential. Fr Kishkovsky suggested that a representative of the UN might be invited to participate.

The Executive Committee **endorsed** the plans as outlined.

C. Reporting by Executive Committee to Central Committee

Mr Briggs referred to the fact that there was still some disquiet on the part of some Central Committee members about the way in which the Executive Committee reported about its work. He urged that opportunity be given on the agenda for Central Committee members to ask questions of the Executive about actions taken in the period since the last meeting.

The General Secretary suggested that **a digest of decisions taken by the Executive** under the authority delegated to it by Central Committee be attached to the report of the Moderator or the General Secretary, as a supplement to the minutes which all members receive. This would give them an opportunity to address decisions taken or make remarks to these decisions. This was **agreed**.

D. Moderator's Report to Central Committee

In accordance with the request of the Executive at its meeting in Johannesburg that the Moderator share an outline of the main thrusts of his Report to the Central Committee at an early stage, Archbishop Keshishian gave a brief indication of the points he intended to include. He would begin with an assessment of the work of the Executive, highlighting significant aspects of the work done since Johannesburg. Secondly, he would deal with a major theme related to the ecumenical movement in general and the programmatic activities of the WCC in particular. In selecting the area of Gospel and Cultures, he intended to focus on the theme **Towards a new Vision of Mission in pluralistic societies**.

Dr Nababan thought it would be helpful for the World Mission Conference if the Moderator included some specific reflections on how the Gospel transforms cultures. Bishop Okullu asked that reference be made to topical issues being discussed in Africa today on the subject of cultural divisions, especially in view of the assembly. Prof. Aagaard hoped the question of cultural captivity would find a mention.

8. COMMON UNDERSTANDING AND VISION OF THE WCC

The General Secretary presented a progress report on the Common Understanding and Vision (CUV) process which he had prepared in response to the request of the Executive at its meeting in Bucharest:

Considerable development had taken place since the Executive last received and discussed a progress report on the CUV process (minutes, March 1993, p. 19). At its meeting in Bucharest, the Committee expressed the wish "that some time would be made available for the Executive to have a full discussion on the subject in order to make its own input to the process". In particular, it "requested the General Secretary to bring to its next meeting an outline and timetable for the study process on the Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC that would ensure the culmination of the process at the Eighth Assembly" (minutes, September 1994, pp.7 and 65). The following report had been prepared in response to this request.

a) In 1993, it had been envisaged that the final outcome of the process might be a statement which, after being studied by the member churches, might be brought to the assembly in 1998 for adoption. The statement would provide basic orientation for the life and work of the Council into the 21st century. This long-term perspective had been confirmed by the Assembly Planning Committee which would see in such a statement an essential element for building the programme of

the Eighth Assembly. In order to allow sufficient time for consideration and response from member churches, a proposal for such a statement should be brought to Central Committee in 1996, then sent to the churches, and revised by Central Committee in 1997. The coming two years would therefore be the decisive period in the process.

b) In order to stimulate the participation of member churches and the wider ecumenical constituency in the process of reassessing the Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC, a study guide was widely distributed in 1993; responses were requested by February 1995. Some twenty responses had now been received and others had been promised. But there were also indications that in some places the study guide was not considered very helpful. In order to encourage a contribution from those for whom a written response was not easy, a series of regional hearings was foreseen, although the detailed planning had still to be worked on.

c) On the basis of earlier discussions about the future and the programmatic orientation of the WCC, (documented in the minutes of the Executive and Central Committees and in *The Ecumenical Review*), and in light of responses to the study guide received so far, four areas would appear to require close attention in the ongoing process of reflection. These included:

i. the nature and task of the WCC as a "fellowship of churches";
ii. the role of the WCC in the "one ecumenical movement";
iii. forms of representation, participation and communication within the WCC fellowship; and
iv. steps towards an integrating vision of the WCC.

d) In several contributions to the earlier discussion, it was pointed out that the Common Understanding of the WCC was best expressed by the phrase from the Basis which calls the WCC *a fellowship of churches*. There was a feeling that the time had come to express more fully the ecclesial nature of this fellowship of churches, thus expanding the second part of the Toronto Declaration. It is also felt that the language used in Art.3 of the Constitution to describe the functions and purposes of the WCC should be reviewed. Further, it should be recalled that Art.2 of the Constitution was currently being reviewed by the group working on Criteria for Membership.

A first target in the CUV process could thus be a review of Articles 1-3 or 4 of the WCC Constitution. A revised text could be sent to the member churches for

consideration with an explanatory memorandum setting forth the basic elements of the Common Understanding of the WCC, using the model of the memorandum by Archbishop Temple in 1938. First steps had been taken to invite the participation of the Programme Unit Commissions, and particularly of the Commission on Faith and Order, in this review process.

e) The question of the role of the WCC in the one ecumenical movement as well as the forms of representation, participation and communication, would have to be considered in dialogue with member churches, using wherever possible their responses to the study guide. Other partners in the ecumenical movement - Christian World Communions (CWCs), especially the Roman Catholic Church, REOs and NCCs, church agencies and ecumenical networks - would also need to be consulted. The coordinating responsibility for this task would be with the Office for Church and Ecumenical Relations. Forthcoming meetings of the Joint Working Group, the general secretaries of REOs and the secretaries of CWCs, should be used to solicit advice and contributions to the process. Existing networks in the area of URM, laity, youth, women, human rights, and so on, should also be consulted. The final outcome in this procedure could be a revision of Art.6 of the Constitution and of the corresponding Rules XI-XIII. Coordination with the process concerning criteria for membership was also called for.

f) The integrating vision expected from this process would have to grow out of input by the Executive, Unit and Central Committees, and from hearings and special consultations. It had been suggested that the Vision statement be developed in close connection with the interpretation and unfolding of the assembly theme. In particular, the Jubilee motif could be considered as a *matrix* for a fresh articulation of the ecumenical vision. While considering the shape of an eventual Vision statement, attention should be drawn to the various processes underway to produce comprehensive affirmations on mission and evangelism, ecumenical social thought, ecclesiology/unity, which could become supporting documents, thus making it possible for the Vision statement to be relatively brief.

g) It was envisaged that a first comprehensive report, covering all parts of the provisional agenda, would be brought to Central Committee at its September 1995 meeting. With its guidance, work would then concentrate on preparing drafts for its further consideration in September 1996. The hearings had been postponed until after September 1995 when the scope of the process and the issues to be addressed have been clarified. Towards the end of 1995, a special consultation would be held to begin work on a Vision statement and to consider possible revisions of the language of the Constitution. It had been suggested that one half of the consultation

participants be members of the Central or Executive Committee. Staff responsibility, at least until September 1995, would be in the hands of the General Secretary, assisted by a staff working group.

h) The proposed timetable would include the following steps:

February 1995	Progress report to Executive Committee
January-June 1995	Consultation with Programme Units, Commission on Faith and Order, Relationships Offices, *et al* Evaluation of responses to study guide
July 1995	Preparation and mailing of report to Central Committee
September 1995	Discussion of report at Central Committee meeting
November 1995	Special consultation to begin preparation of constitutional language, explanatory memorandum and vision statement
Oct.1995-July 1996	Hearings
September 1996	Discussion and approval of drafts by Central Committee for sending to member churches
September 1997	Final discussion and adoption of texts for submission to Assembly

Discussion

Ms Rantakari said that the Nordic members of Central Committee saw the CUV process as the most important one leading to the assembly. She was anxious to know how the ecumenical youth organisations would be involved, since they would be the implementers of the future.

Dr Tsetsis felt there was now a good basis on which to move forward, and agreed that some articles of the Constitution did require updating. However he warned against touching the Basis, which had been the subject of difficult and sometimes painful discussions in the period between Amsterdam and New Delhi.

Dr Aagaard wondered whether a liturgical element might be developed around the actual adoption of a text by the Assembly, as a way of materialising the vision statement and enabling participants to pledge themselves anew to the ecumenical vision and the ecumenical movement.

Archbishop Keshishian recalled that when the CUV process was first initiated, it was seen principally as the churches' process - and yet the churches hardly seemed to be involved! It was therefore important to challenge them to take it seriously as their process. Secondly, there was an impression that many of our churches, not only the

Orthodox, tend to think of the WCC in terms of what it is *not* rather than what it *is*. Many see the WCC as an instrument for *working* together rather than of *being together*. How could we express more fully the ecclesial nature of this fellowship?

Bishop Boseto asked whether our vision of the ecumenical movement would set free and liberate people? Did the togetherness of the church imply suffering together with the people? Or were we talking only in institutional terms? The people are searching for freedom; how do we help them see that they can be free and yet controlled by a relationship in love? He wanted to see a *vision for hope*, not simply a vision.

Dr Tolen saw several different levels - the practical level asking: "Who is the church?"; the theological concept: "What is/what should be the church?"; and a third most difficult level where we want to be and to act together. In the attempt to write down what we mean we lose the movement. We have not yet reached a point where we are able *to be* together; there always comes a point where we feel constrained to protect ourselves by showing our limits. Even if the churches do speak, and proposals are made, that does not mean we are together.

Bishop Zacharias felt that those who formulated the Basis of the Council had a vision, but they had now gone and the context had changed. So how do we get the vision from the churches for today? When we speak of mission, it is not in terms of something we have achieved. What do we achieve when we speak of a *fellowship of churches*? What is the nature of the church in that fellowship? A task for the coming years is to think this out and formulate the fellowship of churches in the Jubilee context.

Ms Best expressed disappointment at the lack of response from the churches. What did it mean for the Council if the churches were lacking in interest? We have to be in close touch with them as we develop a sense of vision. There had been such a radical change in our churches over the past 50 years - even their place in society had changed. The only way for us to be in touch with the realities was to hear directly from the churches.

Responding, Dr Raiser said he did not feel that the lack of response from churches necessarily signified a lack of interest; many churches had difficulty describing their vision and the lack of response was partly due to the period of uncertainty which we were all experiencing. Some churches were going through a process of consultation to help them prepare a response; others wanted to engage in direct discussion. From his own visits especially to churches in the South, he found that churches were looking for a common articulation of hope - that was their expectation with regard

to the WCC, and they were waiting for the governing bodies to articulate this vision on their behalf, to find a language suggesting vision and hope. This effort to speak out together, to bring together our limited visions into one where the churches can recognise their own voices in that common language - that was the risky enterprise we were involved in - but it contained excitement and challenge as well!

Concluding, Dr Raiser said he would focus part of his report to Central Committee on the Common Understanding and Vision process. He was grateful for the advice from the Executive warning against making changes in the constitution at this stage; rather, efforts would be directed towards an explanatory memorandum which could help the churches generate a sense of common ownership of the Council. The Faith and Order Commission would be invited to advise further on what we can say together today in this committed fellowship that the World Council is.

The General Secretary's report was referred to the Programme Sub-committee.

At a later session, Ms Ritchie reported on behalf of the Sub-committee, which recommended that the progress report on the reflection process on the *Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC* be **received** and that the work done in the last period be **commended**. This was **endorsed** by the Executive Committee.

9. REPORTING PROCESS AT MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dr Ariarajah introduced a memorandum on the reporting process at meetings of the Executive, following up a request at the previous meeting for clarification on this matter. The memorandum also clarified the status of Unit reports to Central Committee: these should be seen as the report of the respective Unit Commission and would become an appendix to the minutes, while the reports of the Unit Committees to Central Committee would be shorter and contain only items for action.

The Executive, having oversight of the Council's programmatic life, should be kept informed of major developments taking place, but it did not need the detailed reporting - this was the task of the Commissions. However, in a situation where a programme policy decision by Central Committee required changing, for example, the Executive may take appropriate action if deemed necessary.

Dr Kässmann still saw a tension in the fact that a Unit Committee felt it to be part of its task not only to comment on the Commission's report but to give guidance to

the Unit Commission; questions may be raised about this. Dr Aagaard felt the essential point was to respect the fact that the Commissions have responsibility for the detailed work of a Unit but Central Committee members have an overall responsibility for the policy side. There must be an element of trust.

It was **agreed** to adopt the memorandum as a **minute** of the Executive Committee. The full text is as follows:

1. During the last meeting of the Executive Committee, questions were raised on the nature and content of the reporting to and from the Programme Sub-committee, and programme matters which it was appropriate for the Executive to decide and act upon (minutes, September 1994, pp.72-73). The Executive requested staff to study this question and to bring recommendations.

2. This question was studied at staff level, taking the following points into consideration:

a) Programme and activities reports are given by staff to three different governing bodies, namely: the Unit Commissions, the Unit Committees of Central Committee, and the Executive Committee. It is important to take into account the mandate, competence and the time available for study and action at each of these levels that receive staff reports.

b) The reporting process should avoid unnecessary repetition, enable the decision-making bodies to have a sense of the wholeness and direction of the programme thrusts, and help them to carry out the specific tasks assigned to them by the Rules of the Council.

3. It was noted that the Central Committee, on the recommendation of the Unit Committees, has the responsibility to set out programme policy, to receive and comment on the activities report, and to initiate new directions for programme activities. In the new structure, the Unit Committees' ability to do this has been strengthened by the creation of a Unit Executive composed of the co-moderators of the Unit Committees and Commissions and the Executive Directors. These Unit Executive Groups are responsible for planning and guiding the work of the Unit Committees of Central Committee.

The Commissions, for their part, have to spell out the programme policy into concrete programme proposals and help staff in the detailed implementation of the programmes, with the help of Working and Advisory Groups. The activities

reports given to the Central Committee for study and comment should be seen primarily as the reports of the Commissions and not of the staff.

The Executive Committee has general oversight of the Council's affairs and is responsible to act on behalf of the Central Committee when matters are referred to it, or when a policy decision needs to be made before the next meeting of the Central committee. Given the time at its disposal and the mandate it has, it is unreasonable to expect it to receive detailed activities reports and set programme policies (which belong to the mandate of Central Committee) or to spell out how programme thrusts should be carried out (mandate of the Commissions).

4. The reporting processes to the Executive Committee, therefore, should aim at enabling the Executive Committee to have a general sense of the direction of the programme work, so that it may carry out its task of general oversight of the Council and deal with matters of programme policy and direction that need to be acted upon between meetings of Central Committee.

5. On the basis of this understanding the following recommendations are made:

a) Detailed activities reports should be given to the Central Committee. The Executive Committee, however, should be kept informed of any significant programmatic developments that have taken place between its meetings. It should also be consulted where there is a need to renew, modify or abandon programme policies set by Central Committee, and on matters where decision cannot await the next meeting of Central Committee.

b) The reports to the Executive Committee, therefore, need not be in the form of lists of activities, events and publications. Rather, they should be reports by the Executive Directors, giving some interpretation of the work of the Units, drawn from reports submitted to them by the different streams. The reports should seek to show how the programme mandate is being carried out and what implications it has for the Council's life and ministry. They should aim at generating discussion in the Programme Sub-committee on the overall content and direction of the programme work rather than on the details of any specific programme activity.

6. The understanding given above on the nature of reporting to the Executive Committee (apart from clarifying the roles of Unit Committees, Commissions and the Executive Committee) has the following advantages:

a) it enhances the role of the Executive Directors as the overall coordinators of the programme activities of the Unit, responsible for their integration, coherence and profile;
b) it provides a forum within which the senior staff of the Council and members of the governing body may have in-depth discussions on the overall programme thrusts of the Council and their implications for the life of the member churches;
c) it can help to reduce the number of programme staff attending meetings of the Executive Committee, and the repetitive compilation of lists of activities.

It is suggested that the General Secretary and the Executive Directors, before each meeting of the Executive Committee, discuss and agree on matters that need to be brought to the attention of the Executive for fuller discussion and report through the Programme Sub-committee.

*

At a later session, discussion continued regarding the form of programme reports by staff to the Executive, and the question of how discussions should be recorded. Dr Ariarajah explained that in some cases, a staff document may describe a situation or process but no action by the Executive was called for. It may evoke discussion, either in plenary or in the sub-committee, but how should it be reported? Should the whole document be incorporated in the minutes? Should the discussion be recorded? Perhaps the Executive should consider a response to such questions.

The General Secretary felt it was important to distinguish between programme matters which have had exposure in plenary and on which the whole Executive has had opportunity to express its mind: such a discussion was normally minuted. But when a matter had been referred to or was being considered only by the Sub-committee, a decision was required as to whether any action should be recommended since no previous decision or recommendation had been made in plenary. In such a case, the Sub-committee should prepare appropriate wording for action by the Executive. The Sub-committee should avoid repeating the earlier discussion, but ensure some formal action by expressing general agreement with the lines proposed so that work may continue.

Where matters were not discussed in plenary, such as those dealt with by the Finance Sub-committee, it was necessary for the report to be more extensive; items for information were also included there, since this was the only way the Executive could own that part of the work.

The Moderator affirmed the need for the Sub-committee to identify the major focus emerging from plenary discussion on an issue and say something about the way the Executive sees it. It was not necessary to repeat what had been said already.

Prof. Aagaard agreed, but suggested that it might help the process if programme matters from the Units were to include specific recommendations for action if staff deemed that to be necessary. Then a decision could be made in plenary. Only when there was disagreement should the matter be referred to the Sub-committee.

Dr Nababan asked staff to take note of this discussion and see whether some improvement could be made in the process.

10. REPORT OF STRUCTURE REVIEW GROUP

At its meeting in Bucharest, September 1994 (minutes p.27ff, p.48), the Executive Committee had agreed to the appointment by the General Secretary of a small group to look at some specific areas where a possible change in policy might be envisaged; this possibility had been provided for after three years of the functioning of the new structure approved by Central Committee in 1991.

Prof. Anne-Marie Aagaard, moderator of the Structure Review Group, reported on the meeting held in December 1994 at which the following members were present: Ms Priyanka Mendis, Rev. Livingstone Thompson, Dr Georges Tsetsis and Dr Robert Welsh; Dr Raiser, Dr Ariarajah and Mr Davies were also in attendance.

Prof. Aagaard reiterated that her report did not call for a debate about the present structure, but was limited to a few specific points where questions had arisen. These included the location of the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, within the structure; some matters relating to the Office of Inter-Religious Relations; and the working of Unit Committees and Commissions. The group had also been asked to look at some points raised by the By-Laws Committee and at the Rules of Debate.

A. Ecumenical Institute, Bossey

The Group was reminded that Bossey had been integrated with the Programme on Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE) prior to the restructuring of 1991 and both had been incorporated into the new Unit I. A review of the work of Bossey carried out in 1993 had looked at its functioning as an Ecumenical Institute rather than at its place within the Council's structure, concluding that it should be separated from ETE and given its own (interim) Board. However, any action here could only be

taken if the Executive were to make a recommendation to the Central Committee, and this had not yet been done.

Prof. Aagaard reported that, after discussing the situation, and having listened to the views of the Director of Bossey, Dr Jacques Nicole (who was in favour of the move), and of the Executive Director of Unit I, Dr Thomas FitzGerald (who emphasised the value of the present structure), the Structure Review Group decided to recommend that the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, be moved from Unit I and placed within the General Secretariat under the supervision of the Deputy General Secretary for Programmes. This conclusion was based on the understanding that Bossey is not a programme area but provides a service to the Council as a whole.

Dr FitzGerald then explained the view expressed by the Unit I Commission at its meeting in January 1995: the Commission affirmed the distinct nature of Bossey and believed that this could be maintained within the context of Unit I. The Commission also affirmed that every programme in a stream serves all the Council.

In view of these opposing views, the Officers deemed it wiser for the Executive not to make any decision about the location of Bossey at this present meeting but that, after further consideration of the issue, fresh recommendations be brought in September 1995 for action by the Central Committee.

The Executive was invited to discuss the main issue at stake: whether Bossey should be considered as a *programme* alongside other programmes and thus a part of a Unit, or whether - as the Structure Group was suggesting - Bossey was a *service* available to all Units, in which case it would be more properly located in the General Secretariat.

Dr Kässmann understood the argument of the Unit Commission but was nevertheless in favour of Bossey being located in the General Secretariat: it was different from other programmes of the Council and should not be bound within a Unit structure. There had been some doubt at the time of the restructuring about the wisdom of placing it in Unit I. Dr Tolen also recalled that Bossey had been placed in a Unit in order to avoid having too many separate entities. But in view of the arguments presented he was in agreement with the Structure Group's recommendation, as were some other speakers.

Fr Kishkovsky was concerned that the point about serving the whole Council could imply that such a task could not be done from within a Unit: the wording of any recommendation must avoid any such implication.

It was **agreed** to postpone any decision until September in order to allow time for further debate on the matter.

B. Office for Inter-Religious Relations (OIRR)

Within the new structure, an Office on Inter-Religious Relations (OIRR) had been created in order to pursue the relationships aspect of the work of the former sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Other Faiths. The theological aspects of the former sub-unit's work were located in Programme Units, namely, in Unit I (Theological significance of Judaism) and in Unit II (Theology of Religions). These Units were to initiate programmes in these fields in collaboration with the staff of OIRR.

The Office for Inter-Religious Relations functioned well and was playing the role envisaged by the new structure. However, it had become obvious that the third position (that existed previously) to cover relationships with Asian religious traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism) was essential to the ministry of the Office. The General Secretary had therefore authorised the recreation of this post in 1995.

The theological side of the inter-faith work, however, had suffered because the Units had been unable to allocate the necessary staff time and resources to initiate programmes. This concern had received a low priority within these Units also because of the lack of necessary expertise.

The Structure Review Group concluded that it would be more realistic to expect the OIRR itself, where the interest and expertise existed, to initiate these theological concerns and work in collaboration with the relevant Units. This was a realistic proposal also in view of the decision to add one staff person to the OIRR. The search for a new person could take into account the importance of initiating the theological aspects of the ministry of dialogue.

Dr Ariarajah further explained that when the restructuring took place, it was felt that the General Secretariat should not run programmes but only deal with relationships. However, the distinction between programme activity and relationships had proved artificial: relationships could not be separated from the activities that accompany them.

Prof. Aagaard moved the recommendation of the Review Group:

> *that the OIRR be given the mandate to carry out the theological aspects of the work in inter-faith relations in cooperation with the relevant Programme Units.*

Bishop Zacharias had been concerned that the relationships with Hinduism and Buddhism had had to be shelved in recent years, and he was glad that this work was to be picked up again with the appointment of a third staff person.

The Executive Committee **voted in favour** of the above recommendation.

C. Advisory Groups in the General Secretariat

It was pointed out that the provisions for Advisory Groups in the General Secretariat had not been spelled out in detail and had proved unsatisfactory in practice. The Review Group felt that the matter should be made more explicit and brought into line with the provisions for Working Groups. Prof. Aagaard moved the following recommendations:

- that the Advisory Groups for the Offices of Inter-Religious Relations (OIRR), Church and Ecumenical Relations (OCER) and Communications each be composed of 5-15 persons appointed by Central Committee; they should report to the Central Committee through the Executive Committee and the Committee on the General Secretariat;

- that the mandate of the Advisory Groups be:

a) to provide guidance for the work of the Offices of Inter-Religious- Relations, Church and Ecumenical Relations, and Communications;

b) to advise the Central Committee and the General Secretary on inter-unit cooperation and communication within the World Council;

c) to advise on and share in the task of interpreting the life and work of the Council to the churches and other partners in the ecumenical movement.

The General Secretary explained that the intention of the recommendation was to give the same kind of ongoing supervision that the programme areas receive through the Unit Commissions and Unit Committees to those areas of activity located administratively in the General Secretariat. The Advisory Groups would thus have the same role as the Working Groups authorised under the Commissions have within the Units, thereby providing a clearer process of accountability in the General Secretariat area.

The Executive Committee **voted in favour** of the above recommendations.

D. Responsibilities of Unit Committees and Unit Commissions

Prof. Aagaard said that the intention here was to strengthen the Commissions, whilst ensuring the proper relationship between them and the Unit Committees. The report and recommendations from Commission to Unit Committee should be carefully

prepared to enable the Committee to do its job, but not to duplicate the role of the Commission. It should be made clear that, within the resources (of personnel and finance) approved by Central Committee, Commissions have considerable flexibility to set priorities and direct the ongoing programmatic work of the Units. Prof. Aagaard moved the following recommendations:

- that the attention of Unit Committees and Unit Commissions be drawn to the definition of their relative roles and responsibilities as set out in Section IV of the Rules, Regulations and By-Laws approved by Central Committee in January 1994 (Minutes, Appendix IV);
- it is reaffirmed that Central Committee is responsible for determining the general policy to be followed in the work of the programme units (Rules V, 5.c); this includes the setting of overall priorities for the use of resources, including personnel and finance;
- that Unit Commissions shall have freedom, within the policies and resources approved by Central Committee, to set priorities within the Unit and to direct the ongoing programmatic work of the Units, [including the deployment of the staff and funds available].

Dr Kässmann moved that the final phrase of the recommendation "including the deployment of the staff and funds available" be deleted. Responding, Mr Davies referred to the restructuring process when pressure had been brought to bear to ensure that commissions had no authority in matters of staffing and finance, because some of the problems of the past had arisen out of confusion as to who had ultimate authority. Thus, "Commissions should be advisory". In practice, this had also caused some problems in that some commissions resented the loss of their possibility to handle staffing and financial matters. On the other hand, official authority for these must rest with Central Committee and the Unit Committees. But it was impossible for the Unit Committees to do the detailed work of overseeing programmes - that is the task of the Commissions. This wording was an attempt to make this clear, and he felt the phrase in question should be retained.

The Executive Committee **voted in favour** of Dr Kässmann's amendment. It then **agreed** to the above recommendations (text in italics), omitting the final phrase.

E. Presidents of the World Council of Churches

Following the Seventh Assembly, questions had been raised about the role of the Presidents. Originally this had been an honorary title conferred on distinguished church dignitaries. Now that the number had been increased to eight, they were expected to be more representative, and take an active role in the work of the

governing bodies. The Review Group concluded that thought should be given to the whole question of the Presidium and its constitution, with the possibility of a radical change, perhaps by inviting the heads of REOs and CWCs to constitute a much broader but symbolic Presidium.

Prof. Aagaard moved:

- *that the group considering the revision of rules governing representation and participation in the WCC as part of the Common Understanding and Vision process, be asked also to consider the role of the Presidents in the life and work of the World Council of Churches.*

The Executive Committee **agreed**.

F. Rules of Debate

Following the revision of the regulations and by-laws of the Council, approved by Central Committee in January 1994 (minutes, Appendix IV), the Executive was asked to review the "Working Guide to the Rules of Debate in the Central Committee" so that these could be revised for incorporation in a reprinted constitutional document for the Council. These guidelines were a simplified aid for members of governing bodies, based on the more detailed and complex Rules of Debate set out for use at an Assembly (Constitution and Rules,[section II] Rule XV).

The General Secretary felt that the guidelines were themselves adequate, but that Rules XV 5.b *Speaking* and 5.j *Privileged Motions* might require some revision to bring them in line with current practice. The alternative was to undertake a major revision of all the Rules of Debate and guidelines to bring them fully into line. The Review Group decided that such a major exercise was not necessary, but that revision of Rule XV 5.b and 5.j might be considered.

Mr Davies had drafted some proposed revisions to Rule XV 5.b and 5.j which could be incorporated in the revised constitutional document. These were considered by the Sub-committee on Nominations, which endorsed the minimal changes involved and recommended that they be submitted to Central Committee for approval. This was **agreed.**

*

The report of the Structure Review Group was referred to the Sub-committee on Nominations which studied the text in more detail, affirming the decisions already made in plenary.

At a later session, Dr Nababan presented the report of the Sub-committee and proposed that the remaining items be noted for information:

G. Officers of the Units

Some confusion had arisen with regard to the definition of *The Officers of the Unit* set out in Section V "Regulations for the work of the Programme Units", § 6, approved by Central Committee in January 1994 (minutes, Appendix IV, p.181ff). In drafting the regulations, the By-Laws Committee wanted to ensure good working relationships between Unit Committees and Commissions and to emphasise that Central Committee had the ultimate authority for decision-making. Regulation 2.3 guaranteed this bridge between Committee and Commission. Perhaps the most important function of the Unit Officers was the preparation of the work of the Unit Committee. Practice in the Units varied and there was some anxiety that this regulation might inhibit the functions of the Commission and its moderators. However, it was stressed that Units were free to adopt such working guidelines as they considered necessary and to make provision for a Unit Executive (§ 11).

It was **agreed** that no action was required on this matter at present (the regulations being sufficiently flexible to accommodate the needs of the Units), but that the matter should be kept under review.

H. Staffing Procedures

Following the Canberra Assembly, Central Committee had agreed on appointment procedures for staff in grades 7-10. These had been adhered to and were proving more transparent than those previously in force. However, the procedure was time-consuming and it was felt that, except for the appointment of general secretariat and executive directors, simplified procedures would be more appropriate. Since the General Secretary recommends the appointment of all staff in grades 7-10 to the Executive Committee, he is responsible for ensuring appropriate recruitment, screening and nomination processes. He was therefore encouraged to develop an aide-memoire on guidelines for the implementation of current procedures in a simpler way while ensuring clear accountability. Such a document could be minuted by the Executive Committee and serve as an interpretation of the procedures.

I. Concerns of the By-Laws Committee

The Review Group had also been asked to look at some remaining concerns of the By-Laws Committee (minutes of Central Committee, January 1994, pp.137 ff), but concluded that all points had been dealt with except for one relating to "field staff" appointments. It was felt that provision for these could be made by Units as required under Unit Guidelines (Section V § 11).

11. UNIT ACTIVITIES REPORTS

Unit I - Unity and Renewal

In the absence of the Executive Director, Dr Thomas FitzGerald, (due to illness), Rev. Ofelia Ortega presented the report. She began by welcoming Dr Alan Falconer who had recently taken up his duties as Director of the Ecclesial Unity - Faith and Order stream of the Unit.

The Unit I Commission had held its first meeting in January 1995 since Evian 1992, and there was evidence of a more coherent and integrated style of work in the Unit. The Commission affirmed the Unit's mandate to assist the churches in their movement to restore visible unity, and the process of renewal of humankind. Ms Ortega pointed to five areas of inter- and intra-unit cooperation, noting that the Commission had requested some clear guidelines:

- the study on **Ecclesiology and Ethics** and **Theology of Life**: not only Faith and Order should be involved but also ETE had been stressing that theology of life was fundamental and central in its contextual theologies;
- the theological concerns around the issue of **Eucharistic Sharing** was a matter for study prior to the next assembly, involving Unit I; related to this was the question of a **common date for Easter**, as already requested by the Executive;
- the area of **ecumenical hermeneutics** was central to the Unit's work;
- the ecumenical perspective of **ecclesiology**,
- the formation of **younger theologians**.

Ms Ortega mentioned the presence of some Differently-Abled people at the meeting: they had suffered from our lack of understanding and had urged the Council to give more attention to their situation, proposing that the present consultancy be made into a permanent staff position.

Discussion

Archbishop Keshishian said that collaboration had been a concern for many years; but it was not a matter of putting people together in a group - it implied the kind of methodology which articulates the inter-relatedness of the concerns and issues we are dealing with, such as *koinonia* which has acquired a particular focus in the life of the WCC, especially Unit I. How was this collaboration being articulated at that level? He hoped the whole question of *koinonia* would be seen both in its vertical and horizontal dimensions and its inter-relatedness. We had come to a conviction that visible unity and our struggle for social justice were inter-related: how was this inter-relatedness being expressed?

The General Secretary referred to the draft report of the joint Unit I/Unit III meeting in Tantur and asked whether we were facing an area where our cooperation with Roman Catholics touched certain limits? There was a tendency as far as the Magisterium was concerned to limit the interpretation of *koinonia* to the strictly ecclesiological understanding and to exclude any interpretation in terms of a vertical understanding of human inter-relationship. He was not sure how to respond to this problem, but it had to be faced. The Orthodox sensed the same tension; it was not only a matter of finding language acceptable to all sides, expressing the perspective we want to strengthen. The inherited language carries such a weight with it that its usefulness to serve as a bridge between ecclesiology and ethics had become limited.

Prof. Aagaard spoke in more detail about the Tantur consultation sponsored by Units I and III on Ecclesiology and Ethics, as a follow up to the Ronde meeting (1993), which tried to deal with *koinonia* language, to move a step further and elucidate what the assembly debated with regard to "The Church as a Moral Community". Questions had been raised that had moral implications, not just religious ones. How do we tackle the moral formation within our churches? The concept of *koinonia* cannot carry the total weight it had to bear prior to Santiago and afterwards: we have to realise that images and metaphorical language can only carry so much. We have to employ some other imagery, guiding our lives together: perhaps the metaphor *oikos* can convey something that *koinonia* cannot. With God's *oikos* there could be a Christian *koinonia* that cannot be undermined by something which does not come out of Christian commitment. There were various ways of relating, and the text on *Conciliar Fellowship* adopted by Central Committee in 1972 was an example.

Ms Ortega affirmed that the report of the Tantur meeting would be discussed by staff of Units I and III in order to find ways to work further on the issues involved.

Unit II - Churches in Mission: Health, Education, Witness

Rev. Ana Langerak reported on the Unit's decision to initiate a new document on **Ecumenical Affirmations on Mission and Evangelism** in the contemporary setting, rather than trying to update the 1982 statement. The Conference on World Mission and Evangelism would offer opportunity for gathering further insights and issues in mission and evangelism world-wide.

Describing the thrust of Unit II, Ms Langerak spoke of the vision of a reconciled humanity and a renewed creation. Broad concerns to be addressed by the Unit included the reality of fragmentation in the human community and the false claims

to unity and uniformity in world systems. The Unit's aim was to strengthen identities of people while bringing into being a community of communities. This goal was being pursued through study of God's holistic mission today; action of education and empowerment for renewal, and the action of linking churches, agencies and groups for mutual sharing and support.

Ms Langerak highlighted three programme areas: the **HIV/AIDS study process** involving committed partners both in and outside the churches all over the world. The AIDS pandemic was a challenge that had brought to light the fragmentation in the human community. Action must be complemented with reflection, practice with theory, and theology with healing action: people matter. It would prove a significant study that also deserved to be evaluated as a model for cross-unit collaboration.

A **Christian Education** programme was underway, responding to the situation of pluralist/multi-faith societies. In view of the fragmentation of today's world, what kind of Christian education can enable Christian communities to live in a positive awareness of those of other faith convictions? In many areas much of the material in use was outdated and contained little input from women, so efforts were being made to encourage the development of wider-based curricula more suitable to the needs of today.

Unit II had been asked to draft a new **statement on common witness and proselytism** for presentation to Central Committee and the World Mission Conference, for reception by the Assembly. Besides affirmation of the call to mission and evangelism and to common witness, case studies and situations where people were affected by proselytism would be documented; some attempt to listen to and perhaps dialogue with "proselytisers" would also be made. The intention was to arrive at some new guidelines for common witness and responsible relationships in mission. At the same time, collaboration was continuing with Unit I and CEC on the issue of **proselytism and religious freedom**, with reference also to the work of the Joint Working Group on the subject. It was important to keep inter-relating the different facets here.

The Planning Committee for the World Mission Conference in Brazil had met, and a conference administrator would join the staff in March. It was hoped to have the Bible Study material available for distribution early in 1996.

Discussion

Ms Best asked about the involvement of evangelicals in the World Mission Conference. Ms Langerak pointed out that it was important to draw into the World Conference evangelical members of churches which were WCC members as well as

many interested people outside the membership of our churches. There were also a number of evangelical networks, as well as pentecostalists and independent churches especially in Brazil and Latin America. These would be sought out for participation.

Responding to a question about who the "proselytisers" were, Ms Langerak said there was a good deal of sensitivity because people object to the stigmatisation attached to this term, but many were willing to be in dialogue.

Ms Rantakari asked about the involvement in the study of people living with HIV/AIDS. Ms Langerak affirmed that persons living with AIDS were actively involved at different levels of the study: they were sharing their perspectives and helping to identify situations and models of care and support. Prostitution, sex tourism, marginalisation, were all areas of vulnerability that relate to the main concerns of the study.

Mr Briggs referred to the decision to prepare a new mission statement: how was it envisaged to go about this? Ms Langerak spoke of the new insights in the fields of cultural pluralism, bioethics, and so on; it would be necessary to find links between what had been said before in terms of building a bridge from the old to the new. A process of consultation and of hearings would be set in motion.

Dr Nababan wondered if any results of the evaluation process of URM were evident in the regions. Ms Langerak mentioned the consultation held in December 1993, noting that the guidelines drawn up there were serving as a basis for current work.

Unit III: Justice, Peace and Creation

Dr Kobia highlighted some of the key elements in the Unit's process of integration, and its main areas of concentration in the period leading to the Eighth Assembly. The first of these was one of the themes of life in community: **economies of life.** A consultation had taken place in Moscow in September 1994 on Economy and Social Responsibility, dealing with ethical questions such as how a nation can have a fast growing economy and at the same time have a sense of social responsibility.

The second issue was **non-violent response to conflict**: the need for reconciliation, trauma counselling, the question of impunity and reconciliation - the whole area of help to the victims of mass killings. In countries where atrocities take place, how do the churches view such events, and what can be done to facilitate their work in the aftermath?

Following the Executive Committee's discussion in Bucharest (minutes, September 1994, p.41-42) about the **Future of the Special Fund to Combat Racism**, the Executive Group of the Unit III Commission had discussed the matter and was recommending that the responsibility for the Special Fund be placed henceforth with the Unit Commission rather than with the Executive Committee as in the past. A paper outlining the proposed administration of the Fund was shared with the Executive, and referred to the Programme Sub-committee for detailed consideration (see under Report of Programme Sub-committee, p.59, and Appendix III).

A progress report on plans for the **Programme to Overcome Violence (POV)** had been circulated, which listed the following steps taken towards its implementation:

- a brochure was being distributed, together with a questionnaire seeking further information on church and church-related programmes to overcome violence and build a culture of peace;
- a directory of church-related peace groups, *Resources for Peacemaking*, had been published in a format allowing for periodic updates as the data base grows;
- conversations had continued, but not concluded, between Units I and III with respect to joint reflection on "the question of the theological or any other justification of military power"; a joint consultation was planned during 1995;
- the Unit III Executive Group had reviewed the programme, and decided to include the ongoing activities on **violence against women** as part of the POV;
- the Council-wide staff coordinating group on the Programme to Overcome Violence, convened by the Unit III Executive Director, had met regularly regarding further elaboration of the programme outline;
- CCIA staff was in touch with groups enquiring about the programme, enlarging the data base from such contacts. Some funding of projects in the area of building a culture of peace and training for non-violent alternatives had begun.

In a separate but related area, arrangements had been made with FEST, the Heidelberg-based Protestant Institute for Interdisciplinary Research, for a member of its staff, Dr F. Solms, to undertake the study on the **applicability and effectiveness of sanctions**, and report to Central Committee in September 1995.

All Unit staff were involved in the **Theology of Life** process which would be taken up by the Unit Commission at its meeting in May 1995.

Discussion

Archbishop Keshishian asked about collaboration with Faith and Order on the Theology of Life programme; was Faith and Order involved in the ethnicity question

and with the issue of non-violent response to conflict? and in relation to discussions on civil society and *koinonia*?

Mr Kobia responded that the Ecclesiology and Ethics process was continuing in close collaboration with Faith and Order, and the meeting in Tantur in November 1994 had pointed to further work prior to Central Committee (see also under report of Unit I). On the other issues mentioned by the Moderator, it had been important to wait for the arrival of the new Faith and Order director, Dr Alan Falconer, in order to establish new ways of collaboration.

PCR and CCIA had been working on Ethnicity issues, and input from other Units was also assured. A workshop in Sri Lanka had involved cooperation with LWF, WARC and Unit III. Regular meetings took place with Unit IV on advocacy and sharing, with good cooperation in areas such as Sudan, South Africa, and Rwanda.

In relation to the Theology of Life programme, Dr Tolen referred to the Cairo Conference on Population and Development where Roman Catholics took a hard line on their understanding of the "defence of life", to the extent that they had problems also in their own circles. He also mentioned an international conference being planned in the Cameroon mainly by Roman Catholics; one of the outcomes was expected to be the creation of a pan-African Association on Bioethics. Dr Tolen felt that some input should be provided by the WCC, perhaps through Unit III?

Dr Kobia saw this as an important initiative in the Cameroon on the part of the Roman Catholics; he suggested sharing with the conference the World Council's statement on Biotechnology (minutes of Central Committee, July 1989, p.92ff).

Dr Kässmann referred to the proposed outline for the Programme to Overcome Violence to be shared with Central Committee in September. She stressed that an important part of the programme was: What is non-violent intervention? We must be clear about what prevention is as opposed to intervention, and she hoped that the paper on POV would include something about the methodology for intervention in areas of conflict. The Programme should not deal only with the theological aspects.

Unit IV: Sharing and Service:

Rev. Myra Blyth proposed two themes for discussion: issues related to directions in humanitarian response to human need, and secondly, to seek the guidance of the Executive regarding the new policy on uprooted people that was currently being prepared.

With regard to the new **Emergencies** structure, a joint Committee comprising the existing LWF Emergency Committee and a new WCC Interim Committee had met and begun to analyse emergency situations and the way we respond to them. It would become increasingly clear that it was not simply a matter of the mechanics of emergency response: we would inevitably get more deeply into the ethics of humanitarianism. We must try to gain an overview of the current complex emergencies which were presenting strong challenges for the ecumenical movement.

The churches must develop new and creative ways of dealing with the post-Cold War situation and the reappearance of fascism. This was more a moral and ethical issue than a national one. The churches were in the forefront, asking questions such as: How does humanitarian work deal with the perpetrators of rape, violence, who then flee to refugee camps while they prepare to finish the genocide? How do we act when killers control the distribution of food? Issues like these had led to the withdrawal of many agencies from Rwanda. Are the guidelines we use moral and ethical? We will have to provide some analysis on how the ecumenical family can act in a comprehensive way. Maybe this was something to be dealt with more specifically in the Executive or Central Committee at a later stage.

The second task of this Committee was the search for appropriate models of response - being pro-active in anticipating and preventing the worst effects of disasters. *Capacity building* was one means of ensuring that we do not get into a re-active mode but seek ways in cooperation with NCCs and churches to build models and practices together with our anticipatory efforts both of natural disasters but also of conflicts. The Human Resource Development desk was seeking ways of mobilising the insights and practices of many volunteer agencies which have experience but were not coordinated in seeking ways of responding in crises. Small community teams should be set in motion, suitably equipped to support local infrastructures.

A first evaluation of the work of 14 teams working in Rwanda had taken place the previous week, and the Emergency Committee would follow up on this. Ms Blyth reported that one of the team members, a Norwegian, had been killed in a car crash on his way back to Kigali; members of the Executive asked to be associated with the letter of condolence being sent to his family.

Secondly, the last time Central Committee debated the subject of **Uprooted People** was in 1988. Since then, the number of refugees, displaced people and forced migrants had increased vastly. Advice was sought from the Executive as to how the document could be more than "just another document" but rather a policy paper of a dynamic nature that can be taken into the life of the churches so that, by 1998, we

can ask whether our ministry to uprooted people has really corresponded to the changes that have taken place.

Mr Melaku Kifle went on to describe the detailed process of preparation of the policy paper and the background material. A draft text had been shared with member churches and helpful responses had been received providing further material for inclusion. However, the issue of uprooted people had not yet become an integral part of the churches' ministry - and it was essential for this to happen. How should this policy document be presented to the Central Committee? And, once completed, how do we encourage the churches to **own** it? How can members of the Executive help to ensure that the background document reflects realistically the local and national situations?

Discussion

Members welcomed these presentations and were in agreement with the approaches being taken in both cases.

Dr Tolen wondered whether the question of prevention of conflict might contribute to the reflection in the Programme to Overcome Violence. Did we have the means to invest in preventive action, since people were more ready to contribute when there was a situation to react to? How can we as Christian communities help prevent some of these conflicts from taking place?

Archbishop Keshishian was supportive of efforts to develop a kind of ethics that was responsive to the present realities and needs; the fact that there was a qualitative difference in the Council's way of dealing with emergencies should be spelled out.

Regarding the statement on uprooted people, the Archbishop shared the concern that this become an integral part of the mission of the church, of what the church is and does: this needs to be stated clearly. Secondly, we must urge the churches to address the root causes, which are not pastoral but have political and ethical origins. It was not a matter of individuals - whole nations were being uprooted.

Ms Rantakari suggested that some of these questions be taken up in Regional Meetings during Central Committee, as well as in the Unit Committees.

Bishop Boseto was concerned about the tendency of governments to close borders: How can we be with the people and churches who are suffering, and identify with them? How can we put into practice our humanitarian actions across boundaries? The Theology of Life programme should challenge the old structures.

Dr Kässmann saw the need to encourage the churches - especially those in Western Europe - to speak up against the closing of borders. The asylum situation was dramatic and the churches must be challenged to cry out; meanwhile they tended to hesitate because the issues are so complex.

Fr Kishkovsky felt that an ethical assessment of humanitarian aid implied holding together both the global and the pastoral approach. The ethical dimension was the way by which we can hold together the personal, the institutional, the global and the root cause perspectives.

Concluding the reporting by Unit IV, Ms Blyth thanked members for their agreement that ethics in humanitarianism was something we must address. In raising it we immediately touch on other things the WCC is involved in: Unit IV needed to come to terms with having a dynamic relationship between a programme that is primarily about action while being in dialogue with other reflection processes such as the Programme to Overcome Violence or Theology of Life or *koinonia*. We need to find ways of developing the dialogue so that our activities interact.

The Unit Reports were referred to the Programme Sub-committee.

General Secretariat Offices

Dr Wesley Ariarajah highlighted four main areas of work as a basis for conversation:

a) **Office of Church and Ecumenical Relations (OCER)**
The US Office had been involved in three major programmatic tasks: the Hearings on Racism/Human Rights violations that took place recently in the United States; a series of mid-Decade team visits; and study groups on Gospel and Culture.

The Joint Working Group meeting in May would have on its agenda three areas of reflection: Ethical issues as church-dividing issues; the celebration of the Year 2000, and the question of a common date for Easter.

Dr Ariarajah asked the Programme Sub-committee to look at relationships with the RCC, including such matters as RCC participation in REOs and NCCs, and what significance this has for the understanding of ecumenism and conciliar life.

b) **Relationships with Evangelicals and Pentecostals**: Meetings had taken place in Quito and Lima. Some groups who were not members of the WCC were looking for

some form of relationship with the Council, and we should find a way to relate to them. However, a distinction should be made between evangelicals and pentecostals on one hand, and the charismatic movement, fundamentalists and the electronic church on the other.

c) **Office of Inter-Religious Relations**: Efforts were being made to communicate with the "hard-core" of Islam, to speak with Muslims who have difficulties with Christianity and the WCC, and anything connected with the West. Discussions were taking place on religious law and society; religion and human rights; what it means to be a minority in a majority religious society. In general this work had not been publicised but a booklet would be published in due course.

d) **Office of Communication:** It was reported that *Ecumenical News Service* (ENI) had been launched successfully and appeared to be appreciated, with many stories being picked up also by the secular media.

Discussion

Dr Santana stressed how important it was for those at local level that conversations with Roman Catholics proceed and deepen. Recent statements had helped people work together more closely at local level, giving bishops more freedom to join in ecumenical ventures. This helped too in working towards church unity as well as unity between our people. She urged that ways be sought to reach further agreements that can be implemented at local level.

Dr Kässmann welcomed the JWG's work on ethical issues as church-dividing issues and asked whether this would be linked to the earlier debate in the 1950s concerning non-theological factors. What was said then should not be lost but seen as a contribution to the present work.

In response to a question about whether Jubilee was practised in the Jewish tradition, Dr Ariarajah felt it would be helpful to hear a Jewish/Christian contribution about the meaning of Jubilee in the Old Testament in relation to our reflections on the theme.

Prof. Aagaard asked that material be made available on the different interpretations in the Hebrew Bible and the Christian Old Testament in relation to the Jubilee theme.

The report was referred to the Programme Sub-committee.

12. CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP

Dr Ariarajah reminded the Executive that it had appointed a group to look at the present criteria for membership to see whether they were still relevant for today. The Group had met under the moderatorship of Dr Nababan, including Mr Briggs from the Executive, and Ms Jarjour, Bishop Nifon and Ms Thompson from Central Committee. Four areas were considered:

a) the relationship with NCCs and other ecumenical partners and the ways in which these partners relate as a fellowship to the WCC; the question of a church's ecumenical relationships, its size, etc;
b) the meaning of membership, what it means for a church to belong to the WCC;
c) responsibilities and obligations of membership, including financial contribution, ecumenical commitment;
d) preparation for membership, the process leading to a church's acceptance into membership.

Dr Santana felt that one of the vital questions was: What does it mean to be an autonomous church? Most churches in Puerto Rico were related to churches in the US but in a variety of ways. Dr Ariarajah added the case of churches in diaspora - many were not large enough to apply for individual membership, so consideration should be given to the idea of churches seeking for membership together, as was the case in Switzerland, for example.

On the issue of responsibilities/implications of membership, Mr van Beek said an effort had been made to distinguish between a responsibility to contribute financially and the drawing up of a rule spelling this out as a criterion for membership.

Dr Tolen pointed out that the issue being dealt with was "criteria for membership", not for applications for membership. What did it mean once a church was a member? Was there any way of assessing the membership of churches that had been members for a long time? How do we assess our being together?

Dr Kässmann raised the question of mutual accountability: how to bring one's church actively into the life of the WCC?

Mr Briggs affirmed that these points were in the minds of the Group and the issues were being addressed. A second meeting was planned and a report would be shared with the Executive and Central Committees in September.

13. REPORT OF STAFFING AND NOMINATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

A. Staffing Report

In a closed session, Dr Nababan presented the report on Staffing.

On the recommendation of the Sub-committee, the Executive Committee ***authorised*** *the General Secretary to proceed with the following appointments and contract extensions, the legal obligations of the World Council of Churches to be binding only as from the actual signing by both parties of the corresponding contracts or contract extensions.* (Text approved by Central Committee, January 1987.)

I. APPOINTMENTS

Unit IV - Sharing and Service

- **Ms Pamela Greet** (Australia, Anglican Church), at present Consultant, Executive Secretary for Emergencies Preparedness and Capacity Building for four years from an agreed date
- **Mr Hugh McCullum** (Canada, United Church of Canada), Emergencies and Rehabilitation, Information Coordinator, for four years from an agreed date

General Secretariat - Finance

- **Mr Nik Kong Kam Wa** (Mauritius, Roman Catholic), Chief Accountant for four years from an agreed date

[Note: Meanwhile this candidate has withdrawn.]

II. CONTRACT EXTENSIONS

All the contract extensions listed below are for three years unless otherwise stated:

Unit I - Unity and Renewal

- **Rev. Ofelia Ortega** (Cuba, Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba) Executive Secretary, from 1 September 1995 (will complete 13 years' service)

Unit II - Churches in Mission: Health, Education, Witness

- **Rev. Dr Christopher Duraisingh** (India, Church of South India) Executive Secretary, Gospel and Culture, **for one year** from 1 September 1996 (will complete 8 years' service)
- **Dr Erlinda Senturias** (Philippines, United Church of Christ in the Philippines) Executive Secretary, Health, from 1 July 1996 (will complete 10 years' service)

Unit IV - Sharing and Service

- **Mr Melaku Kifle** (Ethiopia, Ethiopian Orthodox Church [Oriental]) Coordinator, Refugee and Migration Service, from 1 March 1996 (will complete 19 years 2 months' service)

General Secretariat - Interreligious Relations

- **Rev. Hans Ucko** (Sweden, Church of Sweden) Executive Secretary, Christian/Jewish, New Religious Movements, from 1 September 1996 (will complete 10 years' service)

Communication

- **Mr Peter Williams** (Denmark, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark) Photographic/Audio-visual Services Coordinator, from 1 May 1996 (will complete 16 years' service)

III. VACANCIES

Unit I - Unity and Renewal

Executive Secretary for Worship and Spirituality

Unit II Churches in Mission: Health, Education, Witness

Executive Secretary for Education

General Secretariat - Office of Interreligious Relations

Executive Secretary, Theological Issues in Inter-faith Relations, Christian-Hindu/Buddhist Relations

The Executive Committee **agreed** to give power to the Officers to fill urgent vacancies that must be filled prior to its next meeting.

IV. INFORMATION

Appointment by Officers

Unit I - Unity and Renewal

- **Mr Peter Bouteneff** (USA, Orthodox Church in America [Eastern]), Executive Secretary, Faith and Order, for four years from 1 July 1995

Appointment by Postal Vote of Central Committee

General Secretariat

- **Ms Mary Ann Weese Lundy** (USA, Presbyterian Church [USA]), as Deputy General Secretary for four years, from 1 February 1995

Arrivals

It was reported that the following staff members will take up, or have taken up, their appointments on the dates indicated:

Unit I - Unity and Renewal

- **Rev. Alan Falconer** (UK, Church of Scotland [Reformed]), Director, Faith and Order, on 1 February 1995

Unit II - Life, Education and Mission

- **Dr Gert Rüppell** (Finland, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland) Executive Secretary for Studies and Education, on 16 January 1995

Unit III - Justice, Peace and Creation

- **Ms Edna Orteza** (Philippines, United Church of Christ in the Philippines), Executive Secretary, Education for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, on 1 January 1995
- **Ms Salpy Eskidjian** (Cyprus, Armenian Apostolic Church [Oriental]), Executive Secretary, International Affairs, on 16 January 1995
- **Rev. Dr Martin Robra** (FRG, EKD [United]) Executive Secretary, ECOS, on 1 February 1995

General Secretariat

- **Ms Mary Ann Weese Lundy** (USA, Presbyterian Church [USA]) Deputy General Secretary on 1 February 1995

Departures

It was reported that the following staff members had left, or would shortly leave, the service of the World Council of Churches on the dates indicated:

Unit II - Churches in Mission: Health, Education, Witness

- **Fr Philippe Fanchette** (Mauritius, Roman Catholic Church) Executive Secretary for Adult Basic Education, on 31 December 1995 (will complete 8 years' service)
- **Rev. Clifford Payne** (Trinidad and Tobago, Church of God [Anderson, Ind.]) Executive Secretary for Education, on 30 September 1995 (will complete 10 years' service)

Consultants

a) It was reported that the following consultants were appointed by the General Secretary since the last meeting of the Executive Committee in September 1994:

Unit I - Unity and Renewal

- **Ms Ye Ja Lee** (South Korea, Presbyterian Church of Korea) Consultant for Differently Abled, for one year from 1 May 1995 (will complete 2 years' service)

Unit II - Churches in Mission: Health, Education, Witness

- **Dr Guillermo Cook** (Argentina/USA, Methodist Church) Administrator for the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism, for two years from 1 April 1995
- **Ms Eva Ombaka** (Tanzania, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania) Technical Adviser on Pharmaceuticals, for one year from 1 January 1995 (will complete 4 years' service)

Unit III - Justice, Peace and Creation

- **Ms Donnalie Edwards** (Antigua and Barbuda, Church of the Province of the West Indies [Anglican]) for 1 year from 1 February 1995 (will complete 2 years' service)
- **Ms Nicole Fischer** (Switzerland, Swiss Protestant Church Federation) Mid Decade, for one year from 1 April 1995 (will complete 11 years' service)
- **Rev. Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga** (Angola, Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola) for six months from 1 July 1995 (will complete 3 years' service)
- **Rev. Eugenio Poma** (Bolivia, Methodist Church) Indigenous Peoples Issues, for two years from 1 March 1995

Unit IV - Sharing and Service

- **Ms Pamela Greet** (Australia, Anglican Church of Australia) for six months from 1 January 1995 (will complete 3 years' service)
- **Mr Joel McClellan** (USA, Society of Friends [Quaker]) for one year from 1 February 1995 (will complete 2 years' service)

General Secretariat - Computer Information Service

- **Mr Robert Varga** (Switzerland, Roman Catholic Church) Consultant for one year from 1 January 1995 (will complete 12 years' service)

b) It was reported that the following consultant would shortly leave the service of the World Council of Churches on the date indicated:

Unit III - Justice, Peace and Creation

- **Rev. Charles Harper** (USA, Presbyterian Church [USA]) on 31 July 1995 (will complete 21 years 4 months' service)

B. Membership Matters

Dr Nababan presented the report of the Nominations Sub-committee.

a) On recommendation of the Sub-committee, the Executive Committee **endorsed** the appointment of **Dr Robert Welsh** as Moderator of the **Interim Bossey Board.**

b) Dr Nababan reminded the Executive Committee that a place had been reserved on the **Assembly Worship Committee** (AWC) for a person from a pentecostal or charismatic background. On recommendation of the Sub-committee, the Executive **approved** the appointment of **Rev. Juan Sepulveda**, Pentecostal Mission Church of Chile.

c) It was reported that **Dr Constantin Patelos**, (member of Central Committee, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria) wished to be a member of the Advisory Group of the Office of Church and Inter-Religious Relations (OIRR) instead of the Unit I Commission. On recommendation of the Sub-committee, the Executive Committee **approved** this change,

d) Dr Nababan indicated that the Unit I Commission at its recent meeting had proposed appointing three additional persons to its membership, all of whom were members of Central Committee. This was in order to improve the balances within the Commission, since three of the present Central Committee members on the Commission were related to the stream on Ecclesial Unity - Faith and Order. On recommendation of the Sub-committee, the Executive **approved** the following:

- **Rev. Elizabeth Welch** (United Reformed Church, UK) representing the stream on Worship and Spirituality;
- **Mrs Prakai Nontawasee** (Church of Christ in Thailand) representing the stream on Ecumenical Theological Education;
- **Mrs Nadeje Mandysova** (Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren) representing the stream on Lay Participation towards Inclusive Community.

C. Applications for Membership

Dr Nababan said that the Sub-committee had carefully considered the four applications for membership, and recommended that the Executive Committee forward these to Central Committee for acceptance as member churches of the World Council of Churches. These were **agreed**:

- **Eglise Baptiste Camérounaise** (Native Baptist Church of Cameroon)
- **Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church** = associate membership
- **Missao Evangélica Pentecostal de Angola** (Evangelical Pentecostal Mission of Angola) = already an associate member church, now applying for full membership
- **Christian Church of East Timor** (GKTT)

14. REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Ms Rantakari presented the report of the Sub-committee as follows:

1) Financial Update: Mr Davies affirmed that the result for 1994 would not be as good as in the previous three years although it would be some time before an accurate analysis would be available, since the Executive was meeting early in the year and major changes had taken place in the Council's accounting and computing processes. Nevertheless, a high degree of financial equilibrium had been achieved over the last three years and it was not necessary to over-react to the situation. If there were a genuine, longer term reduction in income, there was time to take measured steps in response. The aim must be to prevent wide fluctuations in resources over short periods.

2) Preliminary Report on 1994: Mr Pettingell reported that income had come in much as expected in original currency terms and any shortfall was largely the result of unrealistic budget rates and lack of investment income. Most expenses were at or below budget. Responding to the question as to how the Council should utilise its existing balances and resources to meet any shortfall in the 1994 accounts, he said the main problem was with the General (operating) accounts where income was mostly in DMs, US dollars and Swedish Kroner, while expenditure was in Swiss Francs. On the Activities accounts, expenditure tended to be in US $ and other currencies; most expenses were not paid out unless covered by known income or funds. Finance Officers confirmed that expenditure was within budget, but income - in Swiss franc terms - was somewhat below budget.

The Executive Committee ***noted*** *the preliminary report on the 1994 financial situation and asked the staff, Commissions and Working Groups to take its implications into account in their work.*

3) Income Development: Mr Rath presented his report, noting the prediction that Swiss inflation, 1% in 1994, would rise to 3% in 1995. The Swiss franc being

over-valued, he proposed that budget exchange rates be amended. It was hoped that the DM would strengthen in 1995. An analysis of 22 major undesignated income (UDI) donors showed that one-third would have to reduce and another third would maintain existing contribution levels. Referring to recent discussions with churches and donor agencies, Mr Rath presented income projections indicating that many traditional donors were finding it difficult to maintain current contribution levels. A number of pledges were still outstanding for both the World Missiion Conference and the Eighth Assembly, though the process for the latter was only in its early stages.

Mr Rath also reported on income development initiatives in the UK and Germany; and on plans for the Finance Consultation in mid-February, which would offer opportunity to involve churches in the ongoing discussions on financial issues.

Recognising signs of a reduction in core funding for the Council's work, the Executive Committee asked all Units and Offices to take this into account in planning and budgeting for the period leading to the Eighth Assembly.

The Sub-committee expressed the need for more definite provisions relating to the financial responsibilities of membership to be included in the criteria for membership and asked that the group making proposals on the subject take account of this.

4) Budget Process: In light of the above, the Sub-committee considered the budgets for the coming year, and made the following recommendations:

- to ask the Investment Advisory Group and finance staff to review the current exchange rates used for budget purposes and to prepare revised rates for the 1995 and 1996 budgets for consideration by the Committee at its next meeting;
- to instruct the finance staff to review the 1995 budget in the light of the proposed rates and report to the General Secretary;
- to ask the General Secretary to take such action as he considers necessary in the light of this information;
- to ask staff to prepare a revised 1996 budget, using the proposed exchange rates, for approval in September 1995.

The General Secretary expressed concern about any change in the exchange rates on which the budget for the current year had been based: surely this could not be acceptable? This was questioning an earlier policy decision that exchange rates be fixed for three years, a period which he judged to be too long. Should the exchange

rates not rather be reviewed on an annual basis at a fixed time **before** the budget process was entered into? A review at this stage would mean a drop in anticipated income and a downward revision of the budget which would put the Council's activities for 1995 into a difficult situation.

Prof. Aagaard said the procedure had been introduced in order to avoid any fluctuation that would affect the Unit budgets. She saw the difficulty not so much as the measure to fix exchange rates, as in the consistently wrong advice being received which placed the rates too high.

Mr Davies referred to the volatile exchange markets which had made budgeting a difficult process, and reminded the Executive that the Finance Sub-committee had seen a fixed exchange rate as a means of avoiding these difficulties. But the Investment Advisory Group was in some doubt about the wisdom of continuing since the dollar was not moving up but remained below purchasing power parity. He asked for time to consult further with the IAG and prepare a new proposal.

Dr Ariarajah pointed out that when it was decided to have a fixed exchange rate, an Exchange Fluctuation Reserve (EFR) was set up for use in such situations as had now occurred, yet there was a tendency to blame the exchange fluctuation for the Council's problems.

Ms Rantakari was of the opinion that with the present unpredictability of the markets, it was advisable to look at exchange rates each year prior to commencing the budgeting process.

Explaining the intention behind these recommendations, Mr Davies said the Sub-committee felt that staff should be asked to take action as necessary, and the General Secretary was therefore requested to give this instruction. Mr Davies did not envisage having to cut expenditure in 1995; rather he was proposing that the funds available be looked at, including the EFR, to see how anticipated income could be added to in order to ensure that programmes can be carried out.

With this understanding, the Executive **agreed** to the above recommendations.

5) Requests by the Unit I Commission: At its meeting in January 1995, the Unit I Commission made the following recommendations:

a) it endorsed the resolution of the Faith and Order Standing Commission at Crêt Bérard in 1994, affirmed by the Unit I Committee in Johannesburg, that the

annual sum of SFr 90,000 for the meeting of the Faith and Order Plenary Commission be re-instated in the budget as from 1995;

b) it resolved to ask the Finance Sub-committee to vote the sum of SFr 200,000 as a contribution to the cost of the global consultation on the theme "Ministry, Ecumenical Theological Education, their Viability Today",;

c) that a permanent staff position be created in place of the present consultancy on the Differently Abled.

The first request was in line with earlier discussions and there was no reason why it should not be included in the Unit I budget: in the case of a shortfall in UDI, priorities would have to be agreed among all sectors dependent on it.
Regarding the second request, asking for UDI for a programme activity, it was felt that the Unit should be asked to seek designated funding, since it was unlikely that UDI would be available for this purpose and other Units have to seek designated funding for programmes.
The third request should be submitted to the General Secretary for consideration as part of the staffing numbers process.

The Unit I Commission also urged the Executive Committee to ensure the implementation of a policy that translation for all WCC official languages be provided at Bossey. The Sub-committee did not give attention to this request which should be costed before it can be considered.

On recommendation of the Sub-committee, the Executive Committee **agreed** that:
from 1996, Unit I include in its budget the sum of Sfr 90,000 per annum for the funding of the Faith and Order Plenary Commission and asked that, if a surplus of undesignated income (UDI) were available in the current year, the provision of a sum for this purpose be given priority.

6) Ecumenical Development Initiative (EDI): The Sub-committee received a report on EDI and plans for a fund-raising event later in February, and agreed to consider EDI in more detail at its next meeting.

On recommendation of the Sub-committee, the Executive Committee
- *noted that the Archbishop Iakovos dinner would take place in Atlanta (USA) on February 23 and sent good wishes for its success;*
- *asked that the results of the Atlanta event and the evaluation of EDI be considered by representatives of the WCC and the NCCC USA and that a report be made to the Sub-committee at its next meeting;*

- asked Ms Rantakari and Bishop Talbert (or Bishop Anderson as alternate) to represent the Finance Sub-committee, together with two members of staff appointed by the General Secretary, in these discussions;
- extended the WCC funding of EDI until the end of 1995.

7) Assembly Budget: Mr Rath reported that so far he had received pledges from 54 churches amounting to Sfr 4.3m. It was expected that a revised budget would be presented to the Assembly Planning Committee (APC) in May and the Finance Committee in September which would include all Council related costs. In approving the budget a clear expenditure ceiling should be confirmed by Central Committee and strict budgetary discipline maintained.

8) Shared Costs: The Sub-committee noted that staff and donors appeared to be satisfied with the new system.

9) Staffing numbers: The Sub-committee received the report of the Staffing Numbers Group and noted the way in which this matter had been dealt with.

10) MICAH project: The Scala accounting computer system had been running for its first year; it had been a much more complex operation than the finance staff, auditors and consultants had imagined at the outset, due to the nature of the Council's financial arrangements. A number of problems were still in process of resolution but it was hoped that this would be completed shortly and that the current year's operation would prove more satisfactory. The Sub-committee recognised that any such change can be a painful process and expressed its thanks to all those who had worked so hard to implement it.

11) Audit Committee: Mr John Briggs, new Moderator of the Audit Committee, reported on his first meeting in the chair. He commented on the high quality of both the members of the Committee and the Auditors' personnel. The auditors' management letter following the interim audit had not raised any major difficulties either with Scala or the new accounting system. A manual of accounting practice was in process of preparation. The proposed Audit Consultation would be held in mid-March.

12) Investment Advisory Group (IAG): An evaluation of the management of the Council's investment portfolios had been carried out by a group of experts convened by Dr Maxine Garrett. The group's report indicated satisfaction with the overall management and recommended a further period under the same system, but with the US $ portfolios also divided between several competing

managers. The Sub-committee received the report, expressed its thanks to Dr Garrett and the evaluation team, and asked the IAG and the finance staff to implement the recommendations of the report at their discretion.

In view of the extreme fluctuation in the performance of all portfolios from one year to another (particularly between 1993 and 1994), the Sub-committee asked the finance staff to examine the possibility of creating an Investment Income Equalisation Reserve to which all portfolio returns would be credited and from which a fixed interest payment could be made each year to Units, etc. This would even out investment income and give Units a more stable budget income.

13) Retirement Fund Board: The Retirement Fund Board had met on 10 February. New Swiss laws and certain improvements in benefits made it necessary to undertake a full revision of the rules of the Fund on the advice of the actuaries PRASA, following their "dynamic review" of the Fund in 1994. Maintenance of the level of pensions in relation to inflation was a priority. The accounting management of the Fund had been transferred to the Retirement Fund of the Protestant Churches and Associations of Geneva.

14) Central Committee Funding: The General Secretary, attending the Sub-committee for this item, explained the change of arrangements for the 1995 Central Committee and the possibility of holding the 1997 meeting in the USA.

15) Property matters: It was noted that the apartment building was now completed and that work was continuing according to a long term plan on the Ecumenical Centre and Bossey properties. It was reported that it had been decided, in consultation with other organisations in the House, not to proceed with the re-building of the south-eastern façade of the Jura wing, but to renovate it in the same way as the other wings.

16) TVA (Value Added Tax): Mr Pettingell explained the implications of the new TVA tax imposed in Switzerland from 1 January 1995. Although the amount to be borne by the Council was not likely to be substantial, the complications and extra work involved were considerable, particularly if the Council had to charge TVA on all transactions with other organisations sharing the House. The General Secretary had taken up the matter with the authorities in Berne.

17) Financial Implications of Membership: It was noted that this item would be taken into account in the Common Understanding and Vision process, as well as by the group working on Criteria for Membership.

18) Future Meetings: The Finance Sub-committee would meet on the afternoon of 11 September, prior to the Executive Committee. The Finance Committee of Central Committee would meet on the afternoon of Wednesday 13 September.

15. REPORT OF THE PROGRAMME SUB-COMMITTEE

Rev. Nélida Ritchie presented the report of the Programme Sub-committee. (Some of its recommendations have been included above, immediately following the report on the respective item in the minutes).

The **Activities Reports of the Units** were received with appreciation, and the work done since the last meeting was commended. The Sub-committee made the following comments, which were **endorsed** by the Executive Committee:

Unit I:

With regard to *Ecclesiology and Ethics*, it was suggested that there be close coordination of all groups working programmatically in this area. General affirmation was given regarding the directions of all work reported on.

Unit II:

Clarification of issues around the *Conference on World Mission and Evangelism* was given on the following:

- fund-raising for the event had resulted in 55% of the amount needed being pledged;
- draft texts on *Common Witness* and *Mission and Evangelism* were being prepared in cooperation with other units and ecumenical partners. It was suggested that the Unit give thought to the follow-up of the Conference, with the aim of servicing local churches with appropriate materials for continued study and reflection. The concern for local ecumenism was highlighted.

Unit III:

- The *Theology of Life* programme was affirmed;
- Collaborative work on *Ecclesiology and Ethics* between Units I and III should be strengthened; while the proposed third joint consultation could not be held before the 1995 Central Committee, discussion should be continued;
- The *Ecumenical Monitoring Programme* should be ongoing - in different parts of the world as required - and be an integral part of the *Programme to Overcome Violence*;

- A clear proposal for the functioning of the *Programme to Overcome Violence* should be brought to Central Committee at its meeting in September 1995; this programme and the *Board of the Churches on International Affairs* should work towards identifying situations of potential conflict in order to prepare a proposal for possible interventions in a given context;
- In the area of *Population and Development*, it was suggested that (a) a brief be prepared for use in the churches on the subject; (b) the WCC continue to make input into processes and utilise findings of UN global conferences; (c) a review be made of the Cairo Conference, the Social Summit and the Beijing World Conference on Women in order to make some clear proposals for WCC involvement in the UN processes;
- A preliminary report on findings by the *Ecumenical Decade team visits* should be compiled and a process be developed for programmatic responses;
- A greater emphasis on youth leadership was urged, and an evaluation requested of the *Ecumenical Global Gathering of Youth and Students* (EGGYS) in order to strengthen the WCC's working relationship with global partners, particularly with the WSCF, in this area.

Programme to Combat Racism: The Sub-committee received a report on the Future of the Special Fund to Combat Racism and recommended that:

> *the name "**WCC Special Fund to Combat Racism**" be approved, along with proposals for the administration of the Fund as outlined in the report* (see Appendix III).

The Executive Committee **agreed**.

Policy Guidelines for Work on Africa: The document was commended for implementation (Appendix IV).

Unit IV:

Policy Statement on Uprooted People: The Sub-committee welcomed the proposed plans for the development of a document and policy paper on Uprooted People and commended the plans being made for the plenary presentation to Central Committee in September 1995. Reference was made to the methodology used in drawing up the study *Christian Faith and the World Economy Today* and it was suggested that this be utilised for other studies as appropriate.

The report of the Programme Sub-committee was **received** and the recommendations **endorsed**.

16. DATES AND PLACES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The General Secretary expressed regret for the inconvenience caused by the change of dates for Central Committee and related meetings in September 1995. These would now take place in Geneva on the following dates:

1995	September 11	Officers, Finance Sub-committee	
	September 12-13	Executive Committee	
	September 13 pm	Finance Committee	
	September 14-22	Central Committee	
	September 23	departures	
1996	March 5-10	Executive Committee	- Honiara, Solomon Islands
	September 10-11	Executive Committee	- Cyprus
	September 12-20	Central Committee	- Cyprus

With regard to plans for the **Executive Committee in the Solomon Islands**, Bishop Boseto urged members to take additional time to visit other areas of the Pacific. A meeting with Pacific church leaders would be included during the dates proposed for the Executive Committee: between 5-10 March. Details would have to be worked out to fit in with travel schedules.

1997: The Executive would meet in February, and Central Committee in late August or early September. A decision on precise dates would be taken in September 1995.

17. CLOSING ACTIONS

On behalf of members of the Executive Committee, the Moderator expressed thanks to the director and staff of the John Knox Centre for their hospitality. He also thanked the General Secretary, his colleagues in the General Secretariat, and all staff concerned for their work in preparation for and during the meeting.

Appreciation was expressed to Ms Ludmilla Thackyk (interpreter), Ms Nan Braunschweiger (conference secretary), Ms Ursula Zierl (office staff), and Ms Rosemary Green (minute writer).

The Moderator adjourned this meeting of the Executive Committee at 12.30 hrs on Saturday 11 February 1995. Bishop Okullu led the closing prayer.

1997: EC: 12-15 Feb (A.11; dep. 16) — Geneva
9-18 SEPT
CC 11 – 19 (arr. 10 – Dept. 20)

APPENDIX I

ATTENDANCE

Presidents:	Prof. Dr Anna-Marie Aagaard	
	Bishop Vinton R. Anderson	
	Bishop Leslie Boseto	
	Ms Priyanka Mendis	
	His Beatitude Patriarch Parthenios	
	Rev. Eunice Santana	
	His Holiness Pope Shenouda	
	Dr Aaron Tolen	
Officers:	Archbishop Aram Keshishian	(Moderator)
	Ephorus Dr Soritua Nababan	(Vice-Moderator)
	Pastora Nélida Ritchie	(Vice-Moderator)
	Rev. Dr Konrad Raiser	(General Secretary)
Members:	Ms Marion Best	
	Mr John Briggs	
	Metropolitan Daniel of Moldavia and Bukovina	
	Ms Virginia Gcabashe	
	Rev. Dr Margot Kässmann	
	Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk	
	Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky	
	Rt Rev. Dr J. Henry Okullu	
	Ms Birgitta Rantakari	
	Bishop Melvin G. Talbert	
	Very Rev. Dr Georges Tsetsis	
	Rt Rev. Dr Zacharias Mar Theophilus	
Apologies:	Ms Beatrice Danquah	
	Rt Rev. Drexel Gomez	
	Ms Maryssa Mapanao-Camaddo	
	Rev. Valamotu Palu	
Visitors:	Mrs Vivienne Anderson (USA)	
	Bishop Serapion	
	Archimandrite Nestor Zhiliaev	

Staff:

Ms Carole Anderson *
Rev. S. Wesley Ariarajah
Ms Jeanne Becher
Mr Huibert van Beek *
Rev. Myra Blyth
Rev. Michael Davies
Rev. Dr Thomas FitzGerald
Ms Aruna Gnanadason
Mr Samuel Isaac
Mr Clement John *
Mr Melaku Kifle *
Rev. Samuel Kobia
Mr Jan Kok
Rev. Ana Langerak
Mr Georges Lemopoulos
Ms Mary Ann Lundy
Ms Helene Moussa *
Rev. John Newbury (Communication)
Rev. Ofelia Ortega
Rev. Clifford Payne
Rev. Hugh Pettingell
Mr Günter Rath *
Rev. Bob Scott *
Rev. Carlos Sintado
Ms Jean Stromberg

(* attended part-time for programmatic presentations)

Interpreter: Ms Ludmilla Thackyk

Minute-writer: Ms Rosemary Green

Administration: Ms Nan Braunschweiger
Ms Ursula Zierl

APPENDIX II

MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

Sub-committee on Staffing and Nominations

Ephorus Dr Soritua Nababan	Moderator
Ms Marion Best	
Mr John Briggs	
Ms Virginia Gcabashe	
Bishop Drexel Gomez	(absent)
Metr. Kirill of Smolensk	
His Beatitude Parthenios	
Rev. Valamotu Palu	(absent)

Sub-committee on Finance

Ms Birgitta Rantakari	Moderator
Prof. Anne-Marie Aagaard	
Bishop Vinton Anderson	
Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky	
Ms Maryssa Mapanao-Cammado	(absent)
Bishop Henry Okullu	
Rev. Eunice Santana	
Bishop Melvin Talbert	

Sub-committee on Programme

Rev. Nélida Ritchie	Moderator
Bishop Leslie Boseto	
Metr. Daniel of Moldavia	
Ms Beatrice Danquah	(absent)
Dr Margot Kässmann	
Ms Priyanka Mendis	
H.H. Pope Shenouda	
Dr Aaron Tolen	
Dr Georges Tsetsis	
Bishop Zacharias Mar Theophilos	

APPENDIX III

THE FUTURE OF THE WCC SPECIAL FUND TO COMBAT RACISM

The original purpose of the Special Fund was the symbolic transfer of power and resources to the victims of racism. It was intended as a visible expression of the WCC member churches' commitment to the elimination of racism and all forms of discrimination. It was also an important instrument of the churches' solidarity with the racially oppressed.

Discussions, at many levels within the ecumenical family within recent months, about the future of the Special Fund, have all emphasised that the "special and prophetic" tradition of the Special Fund should continue. The debate has therefore centred around what particular emphases or priorities would best reflect the current expressions of racism throughout the world.

A major emphasis of the Special Fund has been the struggle against apartheid, a regime kept in place by a considerable worldwide network from within the very heart of the international economic power structure. It was only when that support began to falter that the oppressive regime in South Africa had to begin to negotiate alternatives. But despite their withdrawal of support for apartheid, those economic forces have not dramatically changed the way they operate in the world.

There is clear evidence of the notable growth of racism, and the related phenomena of xenophobia. This is particularly so in Europe and North America. The recent hearings in the United States on *racism as a violation of human rights* produced considerable testimony to the deepening of racism within almost every aspect of that society. There was significant evidence, as there was in South Africa, of the active involvement of powerful economic interests.

The rise of unemployment, the continued degradation of the environment and the decline of inner cities as a habitable place for the urban poor, all have their origins in financial and economic decisions which favour particular parts of the society and marginalise or deprive others. It is a pattern repeated in other parts of the world, despite stated intentions to the contrary. There are many victims of this process, but people of colour, including indigenous and migrant peoples, continue to feature predominantly. This can be appropriately called the "globalisation of racism".

In this regard the original "emergency" situation in the 1960s, which brought about the call to set up the Special Fund, still exists. The dynamics of racism may have changed but the outcomes have not. The victims of racism continue to call for urgent action.

The demands of the gospel which led the WCC to create the Special Fund remain compelling. These have been made explicit over decades of theological reflection. Today, on the basis of the same rationale, the Special Fund now calls member churches to respond to the predominantly economic imperatives which continue to undergird and entrench racism in so many countries. In addition, it is important to understand the global interlinking nature of these dynamics. It is an awareness of these forces which produced the WCC call for economic sanctions against apartheid. The WCC needs to continue to confront these economic forces, both national and international, and to stand with those who are engaged in that particular struggle. This is the extraordinary challenge of the Special Fund.

As witnesses to the gospel of our common humanity and our equality in the sight of God, the churches need to counter the re-emergence of theories of genetic determinism and racial superiority which have again become a significant feature in the justification of racism.

The focus or target of the Special Fund will continue to give visibility to the racially oppressed, movements and indigenous peoples as they engage in the struggle for justice and a full share in the decision-making that defines their lives. Particular preference will be made to those seeking to link their domestic struggles and strategies to addressing the international dimensions of racism.

An appropriate time for the re-affirmation of the Special Fund and its new focus would be the Central Committee meeting in September 1995.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE FUND

1. Unit III staff will disseminate information about the Special Fund. Applications will be received by 31 May each year.

2. A sub-group of the Working Group on Racism, Indigenous Peoples and Ethnicity will conduct an initial screening of the applications by 31 July.

3. The Executive Group of the Unit III Commission will make the final decision on Special Fund grants by 31 October.

4. The completed list will be sent to the General Secretary for communication to the WCC Executive Committee and to other bodies as appropriate.

5. The list of grants will be published on behalf of the Unit III Executive Group by no later than the end of November.

REVISED CRITERIA FOR THE WCC SPECIAL FUND TO COMBAT RACISM

1. The Fund shall be used to support organizations that combat racism and are actively engaged in the struggle for racial justice, rather than welfare organizations that alleviate the effects of racism and which would normally be eligible for support from other funds of the World Council of Churches.

2. a) The focus of the grants should be on raising levels of awareness and on strengthening the organizational capability of racially oppressed people.

   b) In addition, we recognize the need to support organizations that align themselves with the victims of racial injustice and pursue the same objectives.

3. The grants are made without control of the manner in which they are spent, and are intended as an expression of commitment by WCC/PCR to the cause of economic, social and political justice, which these organizations promote.

4. a) The economic roots of racism are regarded as a priority due to the wide-ranging and continuing damaging effects of economic racism on all racially oppressed peoples.

   b) It is recognized that white racism remains the most destructive form of racism in the contemporary world.

   c) In the selection of areas of focus, account shall be taken of where the struggle is most intense and where a grant might make a substantial contribution to struggles for liberation, particularly where racial groups are in imminent danger of being physically or culturally exterminated.

   d) In considering applications from organizations in countries with white affluent majorities, note will be taken of the symbolic importance of grants made.

5. Grants shall be made with due regard to where they can have the maximum effect. Organizations receiving support from the Special Fund are encouraged to use this symbolic grant to raise additional funding for their work.

6. The purpose of the organization receiving a grant must be in harmony with the general purposes of WCC and its units.

APPENDIX IV

POLICY GUIDELINES FOR WCC WORK IN AFRICA

1. Introduction

Africa today poses a challenge to the ecumenical movement which goes to the root of the mutual commitment of the churches. Africa is in crisis. There is no need to cite evidence for this statement. The challenge is primarily one of understanding and perception rather than of assistance and crisis management. Is Africa facing a crisis of growth and transformation or a crisis of disintegration? Can we trust the new face of Africa which is emerging in post-apartheid South Africa? How does the church interpret and face the full truth of the tragedy of Rwanda?

The ecumenical movement as the visible manifestation of the world-wide body of Christ cannot remain unaffected by the present crisis in Africa. When one part of the body suffers, the whole body is in pain. Africa, its churches and its people are a vital part of the ecumenical community. For decades, ecumenical energies and resources have been tied up in projects of assistance. Questions of accountability are eroding mutual trust and therefore also ecumenical partnerships which have been evolving over a long period of time. What is needed is ecumenical solidarity based on the trust that Africa has a unique contribution to make to the ecumenical community. While African churches and people are struggling to shape a new social and political culture, the challenge to the ecumenical movement is to sustain the hope and the vision for a viable human community for all African people. This is the motivation for suggesting the following policy guidelines.

2. Description of the Situation

The current situation in Africa should be understood within a wider socio-historical context. The level of euphoria generated by political change in Africa at the beginning of the 1990's can only be equalled to the same at the beginning of the 1960's. A generation ago the struggle was basically for land and political independence. A generation later, we witness a desire for democracy expressed in many quarters. The current tide for democratization and pluralism needs to be viewed as a process of a search for a new mode of expressing the African condition through politics, economics, intellect and culture.

The process of change has generated a crisis of vision and leadership. During the struggle for political liberation the Africans had a clear vision for the future. This time round the reality is radically different. Not only is there no clear vision, but the disintegration of dominant development paradigms, which guided analysis and thinking for the last three decades, robbed policy makers of the few tools of analysis that had been developed. As of now, no new paradigms have emerged to interpret and explain the current situation. This intellectual vacuum is compounded by two

and a half decades of systematic disablement and marginalization of the African people and national institution. The concomitant vacuum was filled by donor agencies and international organizations (including NGOs and financial institutions) in generating knowledge, articulating policy options and implementing change, as evidenced by the structural adjustment policies and programmes.

To avoid a false start, and a repeat of thirty years ago, the democratization process must be an inclusive process. Broad and meaningful participation of all the people must be promoted. Failure to ensure such participation could easily result in the hijacking of the process into hollow multi-partyism, which will not address sufficiently the current mix of socio-political sickness on the one hand and deep aspirations and expectations of the African people on the other hand.

In the period immediately following the Cold War, the church in Africa found itself catapulted into political prominence because of the decline and disablement of institutions of civil society. In a normally functioning democratic situation, civil society serves to counter injustices and abuse of power and provide checks and balances in the governing process. In Africa this is far from being the case. With the weakening of civil institutions, the churches increasingly took over roles for which they have limited knowledge, experience and training. The weakness of civil institutions left an emptiness which the churches are trying to fill, not with the intention of marginalizing them further, but to enable them to play a catalytic role in the rehabilitation, reconstruction and rebuilding of the society.

The current situation demands that the churches in Africa be pro-active. The churches are called upon to initiate debates on governance, democratization of society and institutions, alleviation of poverty, peaceful resolution of conflicts, human rights and social justice. They must also participate, contribute and comment on politics, ongoing debates and analysis and interpretation of the crises in all aspects of national life. In order to fulfil such a daunting task, the churches in Africa are challenged to develop a new theology and articulate a new socio-political ethic as basis for a relevant prophetic ministry.

3. The Role of the Ecumenical Movement

The complexities of the socio-historical context within which the ecumenical work in Africa is to be carried out are compounded by the rapid political change following the end of the cold war. The social crises caused by internal conflicts create further obstacles in the democratization process. The roles of external powers are yet to be fully apparent. The debate as to whether Africa matters any more to the rest of the world seems to be gaining currency. And so are the calls for recolonization of Africa as a solution to the political and economic problems. The dominant Western media explains Africa as "the land that time forgot". It has been argued in some

circles that, today if Africa dropped off the map, international business would scarcely notice it since Africa represents less than 4 percent of annual world trade.

In light of the above the ecumenical movement should affirm and demonstrate that Africa does and will continue to matter to the rest of the world. The WCC work on Africa therefore ought to be strategic. In accompanying the churches and peoples of Africa in their attempt to face up to the new challenges, the WCC identifies areas that ought to be give priority.

4. Priorities

a. Analysis and interpretation of the contemporary African situation. Building consensus and legitimacy of the state, understanding of the nature, purpose and exercise of political power, the role of military and police in a democratic society are key elements that require research, systematic studies and constructive dialogue.

b. The need for broadening of opportunities, as a way of responding to the way the world economy is relating to Africa. The scenario in Africa is that of "persistent poverty and increased conflict". One of the causes was the collapse of leadership - political, social and economic as well as moral and ethical; this influences the kind of strategies that we develop. Alongside with the notion of "survival and sustainability", "human dignity and sustainable community" should be explored further in order to arrive at a coherent vision that will guide the Council's programmatic work in Africa.

c. Social reconstruction including rehabilitation and rebuilding of social institutions and social networks that provide education, health, shelter and other needs in the society requires very urgent attention.

d. Capacity building and empowerment including advocacy and diakonia. New forms of human resource development will continue to be explored and facilitated.

e. Mission and education. What is the ecumenical understanding and new ways of doing mission in Africa today?

f. Ecumenical formation and theological education. The positive response by the church to the social change in Africa means the theology of resistance is beginning to give way to a theology of rebuilding and reconciliation. This cannot be generalized for all situations in Africa, but in the majority of cases, the prophetic ministry ought to combine advocacy and encouragement.

The critical question for the ecumenical movement today is one of church and society. What does it mean to be church in the contemporary African society? What is the church called to be and to do in a situation where traditional ecumenical roles

and tasks are at a severe test and in danger of being socially and theologically irrelevant. This is the socio-historical context within which the church in Africa is called to discern its vision and mission. The WCC must be present with the churches in Africa in this endeavour.

g. Strategic co-operation and relationships with member churches, NCCs and AACC and networks. WCC will, by and large, respond to initiatives taken by such African organizations but will also take initiatives as necessary. A series of meeting with AACC have already taken place. The next meetings will consider ways of co-operating in envisaging and formulating a coordinated and comprehensive ecumenical response to the contemporary challenges of Africa. A space and mechanism for even wider ecumenical participation in this endeavour will be considered.

5. Coordination and Monitoring

The approach and priorities outlined above will best be achieved through coordination and monitoring at Council-wide level. Several stages are to be considered.

a) It is important to be able to provide **analysis and interpretation** on the contemporary African situation. In order to have a common understanding and interpretation of the situation, there will be coordination involving all Programme Units and the General Secretariat.

b) A **coordinated response** is needed, in which all that is being done by the Council with regard to Africa is seen as an integral part of the whole.

c) There must be **joint prioritising**; resources are diminishing and priorities must be decided on by the Council as a whole and not seen as relating to only one unit.

d) There will have to be a **division of labour** on the basis of the above. Once we have a common ecumenical understanding and interpretation and priorities have been established, it will be easier to see who takes the lead in each particular area that we are responding to.

An inter-unit monitoring group will be set up to provide mechanisms for ongoing assessment and evaluation of the programmatic work in Africa. Such a group will oversee the coordination of the work to avoid duplication and ensure coherence with regard to concept and methods of approach. The monitoring group will benefit from the advice of Africa Task Force.